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Contact
Raising Consciousness
Newsletter of the Association of Teachers of English as a Second Language of Ontario

Preparing Students to Teach in the Ethnocultural/ Multicultural/Antiracist/Diverse/Mainstream Classroom!

Robert Courchêne

Introduction

Over the past 10 years I have experimented with a number of different techniques and strategies in preparing students to teach in multicultural classrooms.[1] While some, as will become apparent in the text, have been more successful than others in exposing students to the new pedagogical challenges and in raising their level of consciousness of self and others, almost all have proven to be useful to at least specific groups of students in the classes. Prior to discussing these techniques and strategies and their implementation in the classroom, I would like to identify what I consider to be the major problems in mounting such a course.

(1) Many students do not see themselves as racist; they feel that the younger generation as opposed to the generation of their parents is more open-minded; many of them also equate having had contact with people of other cultures in their classroom and at work as being tolerant of them.

(2) Students are unaware of their own culture- values, beliefs, norms, etc; some see being Canadian as having no distinct culture; Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese all have readily identifiable cultures but Canadians do not.

(3) Many students, especially those raised in "small-town"Canada, have had little or no direct contact with people from other cultures other than what is found in different forms of the media;

(4) Students challenge the usefulness of multicultural education, seeing it as a selling out of Canada's culture (in

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From the Editor

Back in October, when we were planning this issue, like the editorial committees of every other publication in North America, we thought we would tie the content somehow to the events of September 11, starting with educating our readers on Islam. We can understand, however, if you are now suffering from media fatigue/saturation on this topic as every major news organization has already made an effort to do this.

We will talk about Islam in this issue, but only as it is relevant to our overall theme of raising consciousness in the classroom. TESL past-president, Bob Courchene, kicks off the topic by sharing some of his innovative theories and activities for teaching multiculturalism and building tolerance.

As you know, last fall, many Muslim students in our classrooms suffered racial slurs and stereotypes linking them to terrorism – to the point where many parents decided to keep them at home. As teachers, it is our job to protect and serve all of our students, and to help us do this, I interviewed former Carlton school board teacher Khadija Haffajee, the first female member of North America's 27-member Council of Muslims. I also interviewed the Toronto District School Board's Maria Yau, who advises us as to how elementary and secondary ESL teachers can help their Chinese students.

Our overseas correspondents have contributed a series of interesting articles. From the Middle East, Cathryn Colp Roos tells us what it has been like teaching in the Sultanate of Oman; John Allan, has provided us with two ESL/Internet articles. Finally, Gregory Strong, now teaching in Japan, has written an extensive primer on teaching abroad, particularly in Asia.

Regular contributor, Cathy Haghighat has revisited and expanded upon Arabic, which she first profiled in 1993. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Cathy's enormous contribution to *Contact* over the years and also to apologize for editing out part of the Armenian profile that ran last summer, which created confusion. In that profile, Cathy noted that working on the Armenian profile had stirred emotions not unlike those she felt while researching the Albanian and Hebrew profiles. She also had expressed her sadness, frustration and outrage due to the fact that Armenians and the Rom have suffered greatly and have been the victims of genocide, yet the oppressors of neither group have been held accountable. We would also like to make it clear that 'both groups' referred to Armenian and Rom, not Hebrew and Albanian as could have been misunderstood, due to substantive editing.

Also profiled in this issue are Brampton's Muslim Community Services and Durham Affiliate.

Finally, a reminder to let us know of anything that you would like to see in upcoming issues of *Contact*. We are pleased to have received funding again this year to offer you another special issue featuring write-ups from symposia presenters at our November conference, due May 2002.

Brigid Kelso
Contact Editor

Contact

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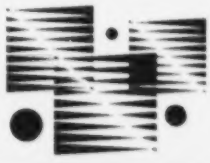

this case, Canadian culture does exist!); this belief often takes the form of "If we went to their country they would not let us keep our culture and religion; why should we allow them to do so here?"

(5) Designing materials and providing experience that takes the students beyond the classroom into direct contact with people of other cultures.

(6) Realizing that multicultural education is not only for "minority cultures";[2] in some cases, "mainstream" students are in greater need of it.

(7) Defining the mainstream-what is the mainstream? How does one become part of the mainstream? Worded differently, How does one become a Canadian?

(8) Getting to stand back- to reflect on who they are and how they came to be.

(9) Getting students to become risk-takers – to cross the divide, to explore other cultures, to get to know people from other cultures.

10) Students come from very different academic backgrounds; i.e., students who have a degree in L2 teaching, students who have selected this course as an option but are specialists in other subject matter areas, administrators.

11) Valuing students for who they are; celebrating difference as difference.

While I do not always face all of the above challenges in every class, they have certainly been the most common.

Techniques and Strategies

In choosing the different pedagogical tools used in this course, my aim has been twofold: to raise the students' consciousness and to provide them with hands-on experience. The list below contains those that I have found to be most useful teaching students in our B.A. Program L2 Teaching and for students in the B.Ed.[3] Program who choose to take the Antiracism Module. (see also Orr and Finney, 1995 for other useful suggestions).

1) Journals: learning, reflective, open/free, exchange

2) Interview with a student from another culture

3) Guest speakers

4) Personal response papers

5) Personal vision statements

6) Inclusive lessons

7) Video/radio/television programmes

8) Book dealing with themes related to multicultural education

9) Culturgrams

10) Consciousness-raising activities

Journals

Over the last 10 years, I have used a number of different types of journals – asking students to react to an assigned reading, a newspaper article, a guest speaker, a class. In addition to allowing students to explore their own feelings and attitudes, journals provide me with constructive feedback on the class. In this type of journal, students are more open about what they think because they know that what they say will be kept confidential (unless they give me permission to share it with the class, or I ask them if I can do so) and they know that they will not be marked for their opinions. They do not get any "brownie points" for reflecting my opinion as I want to encourage independent thinking.

Two types of journal entries students have found most useful are Listening for Discriminatory/Racial Remarks and Student Exchange. In the first case, at the beginning of the course, I ask students to listen for all types of remarks of a discriminatory/racist nature over a two-week period. In each case, they have to note the remark, indicate the context in which it was made and describe their reaction to it. For many students, this proves to be a real eye-and-ear-opener as they become aware for the first time how much blatant, subtle and latent racism exists (the events of September 11th this year provided students with numerous examples). One of the interesting findings from this exercise is that students are willing to challenge their friends who make racist remarks but not strangers, especially not in public spaces, such as shopping malls and buses.

Examples of discriminatory remarks and student reactions

"Diaper head" – On hearing this disrespectful comment I felt very frustrated and eventually angry. Diaper head was a comment being used against a person of the Sikh religion who (for religious purposes) must contain their hair hygienically.

The frustration I felt was firstly since this community has been in Canada for over 100 years on the west coast

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and by no means is new nor their dress. Not being of Sikh origin I felt, that since these cultural facts are common knowledge and taught in almost all of our urban schools at one level or another, the comment was not of pure ignorance but with the intention to humiliate and definitely representative of a malicious nature. Secondly, despite the efforts of all communities and the government, this comment asserted that there is a segment of the population that believes that they may prop themselves up by belittling anything and everyone that differs from the majority (that they happen to be members of).

"Rock-throwing sand-nigger" – This comment was made towards an Arabic person; in this case, a Lebanese person. I find this a particularly insidious remark because it shows disdain for two peoples in one comment: blacks and Palestinians. My instant reaction was a stare of disbelief and a quick walk-away from the offending person. I could not fathom that they had actually said such a hateful thing, offensive to two entirely separate races/cultures. The reason the person made the comment was that the victim had ordered a beer by saying, "Heineken, now." I later returned to the bartender and explained to them that in Arabic the word 'please' basically does not exist (it is seldom used). This small revelation helped a little bit, but I know the person still harbours some negative sentiments.

Many of these racial slurs that I overheard didn't really anger me too much. They did however make me a little afraid. How could the populous of a first world country like Canada, which is supposedly highly educated, be so ignorant? I believe the reasons are threefold: firstly, a lack of understanding of alien cultures, languages, and/or religions. This lack of understanding leads to fear. This fear in turn leads to hatred, which manifests itself as racism. So perhaps the best way to combat racism is an education program, consisting of detailed descriptions of socio-linguistic communities, religious communities, and cultural communities as well. A delineation and explanation of their beliefs and customs would definitely help as well. Understanding breeds tolerance and tolerance means no racism.

Another finding was that people of colour in the classes who had often been the subject of racist remarks while they were growing up found that doing this exercise opened old wounds. Many had built up a protective wall around their persona deciding to simply ignore such remarks. This was especially the case when they were again targeted while doing the assignment.

Overall I feel like these past two weeks have made me very sensitive, and I hope not to lose that sensitivity but rather to temper it so that I can be aware but not paranoid. Especially because I have always been somewhat aware when comments are directed toward myself or to people of Chinese background, but not as aware of racial comments in general. I think this is very important in teaching as students will need teachers that will stand up for them.

A second type of journal involves exchanging with ESL students in the K-12 system or in adult ESL programmes about their experiences in becoming Canadians. During the course of a semester they exchange with their partner about 6-8 times. The journals are of a personal and confidential nature. Anything that is shared is at the partner's initiative. I never read the journals unless given permission to do so and return them to the students at the end of the year. The participating ESL students are given a certificate with the crest of the University of Ottawa and signed by the participating teachers. In addition to learning about the student's family and school experience, their problems of settlement in their new country, they also gain insights into the student's progress in English over the semester; they see how students have to struggle to master the language.

A second type of journal involves exchanging with ESL students in the K-12 system or in adult ESL programmes about their experiences in becoming Canadians.

Hi Sarah,

Are you watching the Olympic games? I watched team Canada kick kazakhstan buts. Are you going to wath Rusha vs Finland I hope Rusha wins team Finland.

Igor

P.S. I come from Yugoslavia

In some of the journals the students spoke quite openly about the effects of war and famine on their families. Not all exchanges, however, are of a serious nature as is obvious from the above example; as well, around Valentine's Day and Easter the journals are literally filled with candies, eggs and special cards. One of the students' regrets with the journal exchange is that it did not last for the whole academic year; they felt that over this longer period of time they would have been able to establish a more lasting relationship with their student partner and learn more about their acculturation to the school system and Canadian society.

Interview with a student from another culture

In order to encourage students to get to know someone from a cultural group other than their own, I asked them to interview a student from another culture with a different skin colour than their own. I provided them with a series of questions (see Appen-

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dix A) but encouraged them to go beyond the list and investigate other topics. I also asked them to add a reflective section at the end on their experiences. When I first began using this pedagogical tool, I insisted that the student had to have been born outside the country but I have since begun to allow them to use students born in Canada as I wanted to show them that being born here is no defence against discrimination. This has proved to be a very valuable exercise as the students come face to face with people who have been victims of both racist remarks and physical acts. They realize, as is evident from the example below, that their fellow students have suffered at the hands of other Canadians.

When asked whether he felt racism exists in Canada, his response was "ABSOLUTELY". He told me that there are few days that he does not see the existence of racism.

Sample interview questions and responses

Does racism exist in Canada?

Yes, right now [racism exists in Canada]. Well, not flat out racism, but you can feel that it is there. It's hard to explain. People are afraid of foreign people here. You can't see it, but if you are a foreigner, you can feel it.

I know some women who wear a hijab, and they say they get stared at in the market. Even more in these days, more than usual. One friend told me that he was spit on once, actually. It's disappointing to hear. But I have never really seen this. I just have the feeling.

I am always asked, "Where are you from?" "Why?" "Cause you are coloured." Most people think I am Spanish so everything is fine. At the bar they ask, "Are you Spanish? Italian?" "No, I'm an Arab." "Oh" they will say. People find it strange, you can tell, but I am okay with them and I keep talking with them, and its okay. Most people are afraid of me. It is the same in my country, we are afraid of the cultures you don't know. (Student from Middle East)

Although his wife feels much differently, he explains that he does not have the energy to challenge each and every situation that he feels discriminated against, especially those he feels nothing positive will come from.

Does racism exist in Canada?

When asked whether he felt racism exists in Canada, his response was "ABSOLUTELY". He told me that there are few days that he does not see the existence of racism. He feels that he has been very aware of racism most of his life, and is very sensitive, "perhaps a bit too sensitive" to any hint of racism. He has been on the receiving end of several racial comments including comments and actions within his occupation. He is also involved in an inter-racial marriage and has received countless comments regarding this relationship.

Have you ever been subject to racist remarks?

He explained to me that he has often been subject to racial remarks and discrimination as a result of his race. He explained several incidents where he was refused service in several different places. He and his family travel often and stay in hotel rooms. He described an incident when he went in to a hotel to get a room for his family but was told there were no rooms available. As he stood there, other people were arriving with the same request and were given a room. When he confronted the hotel worker that the vacancy sign was still displayed and asked why others were given rooms, he was told that all the rooms were booked and that nothing could be done about it. When he left to explain the situation to his wife (who is white) she decided to go in and request a room. Coincidentally there was an available room. Since this situation has occurred several times in the past, he did not pursue this. However, his wife did. He has also explained several situations in which he has been approached by security asking what his purpose was in several situations including stores and hotels.

He has also experienced discrimination in his job. He is a teacher and has had students taken out of his class unexpectedly because parents had requested that their child be moved to another class. He didn't receive any additional reason other than that, but he assumed the reason to be because of the colour of his skin.

With situations such as those just described, his reaction has been mixed. He explained that he was very naïve at first and did not see things as his wife did. In many ways, his wife is more aware and more angered by such behaviour. He feels that he has dealt with racism and discrimination his whole life. He has been upset by it and disappointed, but also has decided to pick his battles. Although his wife feels much differently, he explains that he does not have the energy to challenge each and every situation that he feels discriminated against, especially those he feels nothing positive will come from.

While all students indicated that this was a most valuable experience, they also raised some important questions concerning finding a student to interview. They pointed out, and rightly so, that to ask a student from another culture to be interviewed so that they could fulfill the requirements of an assignment was very demeaning for the student being interviewed; they felt they were "using" the student and were not

really interested in who (s)he was and what actually happened to him or her. They suggested that it would be better to contact the students in our English Intensive Program or in the International Club on campus to ask for volunteers indicating ahead of time the purpose of the interview. While the students being interviewed did not object and in many cases the initial interview led to more lasting friendships, their suggestions are very sound. Students who interviewed friends from another culture frequently commented that, as a result of the interview, they discovered things about their friend they had not previously known.

Guest Speakers

Given the knowledge explosion of the last few decades, it is no longer possible to be an expert in a number of areas. As teacher educators we must accept this and call on experts in different fields whenever possible. Over the years, I have invited experts on Family Reception and Orientation, Immigration and Settlement, Multicultural Liaison, Conflict Resolution, religion, and racism. I have also invited students and adults to come in to discuss their experiences. These people bring to the classroom lived experiences that go beyond the written page; they breathe life into what is found in the written texts. This year as a result of the backlash against Muslims and Islam, I invited a former teacher who is now deeply involved in the Muslim community to speak to my class. Besides addressing some of the most important questions the students had about Muslims and Islam, she created a classroom ambiance that encouraged students to discuss with her a number of very sensitive issues. In addition to being much more knowledgeable and more open, one of the things that most impressed my students was when I told them that she had refused an honorarium, as for her this was service to humanity. Recognizing that there are people in the community that are better prepared than we are to address specific issues should not be seen as a shortcoming.[4]

Personal Response Papers

For the first time this year, I experimented with an idea I borrowed from Awad Ibrahim, namely, a personal response paper. This is a short review (usually one-two pages) of two controversial and thought-provoking articles on a specific topic. Students are expected to 'read', dialogue with, respond to, and talk back to the two articles. Since it is a 'reading' note, there is no right or wrong reading. There are, however, clear, concise, comprehensible, creative and original readings/ arguments. Students must indicate how the two articles engage them? What particular aspect, or aspects, stood out and why? Students are told that they my choose to focus on one theme or discuss themes that cut across the two articles. For this year's assignment, I used two articles written by Peggy MacIntosh (1997) and Martha Mahoney (2000). These two articles examine white privilege and the construction of whiteness in society (see Appendix B for an excerpt of MacIntosh's Questionnaire). Other articles could also have been used (see Sleeter, 1993, 2000; Jensen, 1998, 1999; personal communication from Carl James, York University).

These two articles left no one indifferent in the class; many white students reacted very strongly to the notion that their skin colour conferred any type of privilege on them. On the other hand, students of colour agreed with much of what was said. One of them said that 21/27 entries in MacIntosh's Questionnaire applied to him. Another group of students while agreeing that their skin colour might indeed have given them certain advantages stated they were not willing to give up their privileges so that the less fortunate in the society might also benefit from them. In one of the classes based on articles, the following exchange ensued:

Student: My parents and ancestors have worked hard for us to have what we have to day; if our land and possessions were given back to the First Nations' Peoples that would really suck.

Teacher: Don't you think it sucked when the government took or gave away the First Nations' lands to people who came to settle their country?

Student: (Silence followed by a grudging), I guess it did.

What comes through in their reactions (see reactions below) and the above exchange is that they want to build a just society without the privileged, the dominant group, having to make any compromises. If such attitudes are carried into the classroom, establishing a cultural comfort zone where everyone has a voice and everyone's voice counts will be very difficult. They need to realize that if we are going to have classrooms based on justice and equity, there will have to be compromise on both sides. Multicultural and antiracist education is for everyone. As well, the fact that they see themselves as not being racist does not mean that they do not have a responsibility to resist it, to stamp it out.

Student: My parents and ancestors have worked hard for us to have what we have to day; if our land and possessions were given back to the First Nations' Peoples that would really suck.

As well, the fact that they see themselves as not being racist does not mean that they do not have a responsibility to resist it, to stamp it out.

Most of the students recognized that skin colour did confer unearned privileges, privileges that in most cases they were not aware of, or that they had never thought about. It had never crossed their mind that someone might not be rented an apartment because (s)he was Black or Asian. However, not all were of this opinion.

Why are these assets "unearned" anyway? And if they are, then what in life is earned? Have I earned the right to scratch my nose if it is itchy? No, but I have that freedom. The difference is that everyone has this privilege, regardless of skin colour. McIntosh has listed some of the disadvantages of coloured people, not the over-advantages of whites. Everyone should be able to swear without others attributing it to the bad morals of their race. Everyone should be able to get legal help without their race working against them. Obviously, this is not the case. Black people, along with other visible minority groups in this country and in the United States are disadvantaged considerably in relation to white people. However, the issue is gaining the advantages for those who don't have them, not lessening those of people who do.

Both articles discuss the topic of whites not recognizing white privilege. Peggy McIntosh says that she was taught about racism and how it puts others at a disadvantage but not how white privilege puts whites at an advantage. To me it seems obvious that whites have certain advantages. Maybe this is not explicitly taught in school, but its something that you come to realize through life experiences. She also states that whites are taught to think of their lives as normal and ideal so that when we work to benefit others we try to make them be more like us. Again, I think that people are more informed about these kinds of issues. Granted, this article was written with the U.S. society in mind and maybe things are different over there; I don't know. But from talking to people, mostly in my generation, they realize that imposing our beliefs and our culture on others is not necessarily what is best for them, and so in trying to help them we would try to keep their beliefs and culture in mind.

In addition to using articles as the basis for a Personal Response Paper, one can also use films such as Jane Elliots' film *The Eye of the Storm* (1969) in its various versions (It is more commonly known as 'Brown Eyes, Blue Eyes').

While students may not enjoy having to write response papers, they all agree that such assignments force them to question and re-evaluate their views on a number of topics. They play an important role in consciousness-raising, one of the principal goals of the course.

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Personal Vision Statements

At the end of the course, I ask students to submit a personal vision statement outlining their position on multicultural and antiracist education. It is to be based on class lectures, assignments, personal experience and readings. As with the Personal Response Paper, there are no right answers; rather they are asked to present coherent and substantive arguments for their position. This task requires them to synthesize their ideas, to develop a framework, the beginnings of a philosophy of multicultural and antiracist education. Many students struggle with this as they are still working through a number of issues and, in many cases, have not had enough concrete experience to test their hypotheses. Despite these problems, students agree that it is a worthwhile exercise as it forces them to question and re-evaluate much of what they have taken for granted.

At the end of the course, I ask students to submit a personal vision statement outlining their position on multicultural and antiracist education.

Sample Reponse

A warm school environment should be provided that is free from discrimination in order to best serve the student's interests. First of all, to make the school an inclusive environment, all school stuff should work on making a welcoming school setting so that children can build a trust to the racial and ethnocultural discrimination-free interaction (Reflection 29). Any racial remarks, bias, prejudices should be cracked down on so that children learn everyone is equally important regardless of his/her skin colour or cultural background. The central figure in children's school life is the teacher. The teacher contributes to every aspect of the student's learning and unlearning of new knowledge. The teacher should see each student's ethnocultural differences as uniqueness and potentials, not as possible problems. Creating an effective communication network with parents of different ethnocultural communities is required for the teacher to have sufficient knowledge about each student. Initiating parents' active involvement in their children's school work is also necessary.
(L2 Speaker)

Inclusive Lessons

In class, I present Bank's (1994) four models of multicultural education along with Dei's model of antiracism (1996) education. In asking students to prepare an inclusive lesson (see outline in Appendix

C), I ask them to work at one of different levels. Not all students are able to begin working at the Social Action level; some prefer to start at the beginning. I keep telling my students that a becoming an multicultural/antiracism teacher is a never ending journey; you are always on the way to somewhere and the best place to start is at the beginning, within yourself. The aim of this exercise is to see if students are able to apply what they have learned in designing materials for the classroom; in such lessons, methodology is as important as content. I allow students not only to choose their clientele but also the teaching context; as most of them volunteer in classroom or are heading out for their practicum, I want them to produce materials they can actually use. I encourage students to both conference with me and to submit drafts that I can react to.

Videos/Radio and Television Programs

I use such programs for focused discussions and to explore specific topics. For example, *For Angela* (1993) and the National Film Board's *Playing Fair Series* (four films: 1992) deal with racism and other forms of discrimination based on gender, religion, cultural practices, etc. While often somewhat overdramatized, they present issues that future teachers will have to deal with in the classroom. They provide an opportunity for all students to explore a given topic; white students are often surprised to learn that their friends of a different skin colour have been the targets of racism. On different occasions, I have asked students to view one of these films or a commercial film and to write a journal reflection on it; i.e., *The History of X, Where the Sprit Lives.*

Books dealing with themes related to Multicultural education.

One of the best ways to delve into a new culture is to read the literature of its best authors. To this end, I compiled a short list of books that deal with issues such as race, the role of women, class, and caste in a number of different cultures; wherever possible, I have also tried to include children's literature.[5] I made a special effort to select books about minorities in the Canadian context or books written by Canadian authors about such topics. Students were asked to choose a book from the list or to select a book on their own subject to my approval. Books such as Rohinton Mistry's (*A Fine Balance* or Rudy Weibe and Yvonne Johnson's (1998) *Stolen Life: The Journey of a Cree Women* opened never-imagined worlds to my students.

Culturgrams

"Culturgrams are 4-sided handouts designed as briefings to aid understanding for, and communication with, people of other cultures... Culturgrams are condensations of the best information available". (www.uia.org/uiadocs/religram.htm; see also www.culturgram.com).

Each culturgram follows a standard format:

Map: **Indicating the continental location and principal cities**

Customs and courtesies: **Greetings; Visiting; Eating; Public Meetings; Gestures.**

The People: **General Attitudes; Population; Language; Religion**

Lifestyle: **The Family; Dating and Marriage; Social and Economic levels; Diet; Work Schedules; Recreation; Holidays.**

The Nation: **Land and Climate; History and Government; Economy; Education; Transportation; Health**

Ottawa-Catholic Immigration Services (OCIS) with funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada has also produced a large number of Cultural Profiles in both English and French that are similar in format (can be obtained free charge at the following address http://cwr.utoronto.ca/cultural/english/index.html).

For this assignment, students were asked to choose a culture from an agreed-upon list and to provide information on five core topics and three additional topics. They were instructed to interview as many people as possible from the cultural group to obtain as inclusive view as possible of the cultural group. Students were also encouraged to interview people from different generations within the cultural group. As with the Interview with a Student, the greatest obstacle was finding a group of people who would agree to talk about their culture; once these initial contacts were made, the project proved to be very rewarding for the students. In some cases, the culturgrams submitted by the students were given to OCIS as source material for future cultural profiles. An objection often raised in regards to culturgrams is that if one consults three different groups from the same ethnocultural group about their culture, one will get three completely different culturgrams.

Consciousness-raising activities

While the underlying goal of almost all of what is done in these classes is to raise the students' con-

One of the best ways to delve into a new culture is to read the literature of its best authors.

I made a special effort to select books about minorities in the Canadian context or books written by Canadian authors about such topics.

sciousness of issues related to multicultural and antiracist education, I use a variety of techniques to make students aware of the underlying assumptions, schema, values they have interiorised. One of the common assertions made by students is that there is no distinct Canadian culture. This was reinforced by the fact that many of the students they interviewed were also of this opinion. To try to make them realize that this was not the case, I presented Roch Carrier's (1979) wonderful short story *The Hockey Sweater* in book and video format. After they had seen the video, I asked them to break into groups and to list the ides, concepts, customs, etc., they would have to teach a group of newly arrived students so that they could understand the film. Some of what they considered essential to teach is found below:

After completing the exercise, they realized that indeed there was a real Canadian culture but that it was so much part of them that they were not conscious of it.

The role of religion in Quebec society: The Status/ role of the priest in Quebec communities

Catholicism: sin, penance, hell, etc.

Eaton and the Eaton's Catalogue

English-French Relations

Montréal Canadiens and Toronto Maples Leafs: Symbols of English and French Canada; rivalry between these two teams;

Hockey: the game, Hockey Night in Canada (Saturday), national sport, rules of the game

Maurice Richard: player, role model, legend, sweater number 9

After completing the exercise, they realized that indeed there was a real Canadian culture but that it was so much part of them that they were not conscious of it. To make these same students aware of the underlying culture of the school and the classroom, I asked them how they would respond to the following request from their principal:

As a teacher, I have often made the mistake of asking a person from a specific ethnocultural background to be the spokesperson for the group (even glancing at the person when asking a question can have the same effect).

As part of the information session for parents to the school, you have been asked to meet with the parents of newly-arrived students and to explain to them the culture of the school and the expectations that the school and teachers will have for their sons and daughters. These parents come from a number of different ethnocultural and religious backgrounds. List below the information that you discuss with them.

The students listed more than 25 components some of which appear below:

The school day begins at 8:50 and ends at 3:10.

Homework is given on a regular basis; student are expected to do it;

Exams are given on a regular basis in every course;

Parents can help students with assignments;

Teachers are not allowed to touch or strike students;

Classes are co-ed;

Students are required to take some form of physical education;

Field trips are part of the school curriculum; students may be asked to pay extra;

Group work is common; male and female students work together;

Health education is a subject in the schools.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude this article with three observations based on my experience over the past ten years.

Setting the limits of tolerance

What many students find the most difficult in this type of course is setting the limits of tolerance. Does teaching multicultural education mean that I have to give up everything that I believe in? Do I have to allow people from other cultures to lead their lives in Canada exactly how they lived them in their country of origin? Is everything acceptable or can I set limits within my classroom? Can Canada set limits within its borders for what should be allowed? For example in the public school, should students from all culture be able to demand a "private space" within the "public space" to practise their religion? Are public schools not to be neutral in terms of religion? (see How far do we go? from *Tapestry (2001)* for a exploration of these issues). Students need time to think through these issues, to learn how to distinguish between aspects of our life that are governed by the Charter of our laws and, therefore, must be accepted by all, and those areas in which tolerance is permitted and even encouraged. As people are constantly trying to test and push back such boundaries, this setting of limits must be seen as a lifelong struggle.

Centring on minorities in the classroom

As a teacher, I have often made the mistake of asking a person from a specific ethnocultural background to be the spokesperson for the group (even glancing at the person when asking a question can have the same effect). As is evident from the two excerpts from student journals below, this can have a very damaging effect on such students.

(First Entry)

I'm tired of feeling like it's my responsibility to educate others. I defy many stereotypes and try my best to succeed in life. Part of my drive in life has been to prove people wrong. I don't speak in slang, nor do I have gold teeth. I don't have braids, nor am I a gangster. I stopped excelling in sports-although I did at one time-because I got tired of people telling me that it comes naturally to Blacks. I'm tired of the assumptions that I can only be good at certain things in life like sports and simple work. I'm tired of the empty feeling. I'm tired of fighting for true equality, and I'm tired of pretending that little jabs at other cultures don't hurt me. I'm tired of being the only one to say anything in defence of "minorities."

I'm tired of being told I'm lucky not to have "dark black" skin and afro hair. I'm tired of not being considered "Black enough" to be "really Black". I hate looking in the mirror each morning and facing the fact that today someone will see me for nothing but the colour of my skin. They will judge me on this and they will treat me differently. I am glad that I am also finally able to love myself and my colour. Whenever I regress I think: "Well, people pay ridiculous amounts of money for curls like these and they fry themselves on beaches and in tanning beds for skin like mine."

(Second Entry)

The last thing I wanted to mention is a little awkward. As I've been keeping my eyes and ears open for any racially-oriented comments, I must say that the only time I feel a little uncomfortable is in this class. I know that multiculturalism is a difficult and touchy subject. The reason I wanted to be in this class was precisely because I wish that it would stop being so taboo. I find that people have a tendency to tiptoe around it. However, it is strange that in a class of approximately thirty people, only three students are of a 'visible racial minority' (I use all these terms with a grain of salt). I feel a little like I'm on display, like I'm an example. Part of me wants to invalidate these feelings and tell myself that I'm being too sensitive. Part of me says that I should shut that first part of me up, and not deny what I'm feeling – Even if only to acknowledge my own biases and soft spots. And part of me is extremely happy to be an 'example' and wants to tell everyone about my life, my experiences and my culture. Perhaps I should be glad that so many people that are not seen as a 'minority' in this country are interested in taking a course in multicultural education. I try to come with an open mind and not to jump at shadows. I think that in class, everyone should have the chance to speak freely and not worry about the semantics of the language they are using. The 'politically correct' movement makes me very uncomfortable. I think that it's more important to understand the meaning and not to trip ourselves up with the words. It would be terrible if someone felt tongue-tied for fear of offending someone in the class.

As teachers, we need to be careful that we do not contribute to this "singling out" that they feel (only a fool would ask any Canadian to speak for the whole country); there is as much diversity of opinion among white Canadians as there is among Black Canadians, Chinese Canadians, etc. In most cases, students of colour have the added challenge (burden) of having to negotiate two or three identities. As well, as with many white Canadians of different cultural backgrounds, they may have long since lost contact with their culture of origin; because I look Chinese does not mean I am, that I speak the language, that I steeped in that culture. Does this mean that we should never ask students of colour questions in our class? No, but we must not make any assumptions about who they are; we need to be sensitive, non-judgemental, as we should be with all our students.

The mainstream

What is the mainstream? Who constitutes the mainstream? Worded otherwise, How does one become a Canadian? For me these are not rhetorical questions as we frequently hear people talking about the mainstream classroom or integrating students into the mainstream classroom. A typical urban classroom today consists of 20-25 students: 50% white and 50% of other skin colours; many in the latter group were born and raised in Canada; the rest are new Canadians. I believe one can legitimately ask who in this group belongs to the mainstream? Is skin colour the only criterion to be used? Can we assume that all white students will automatically belong to the mainstream? Are we using mainstream to exclude students who should legitimately be included? Is the mainstream classroom, or for that matter any classroom, not diverse? It is time to rethink this concept, for in my opinion, it is closely linked to how one becomes a Canadian or, more precisely, whom those in power allow to become Canadians. How one defines it has important pedagogical consequences.

To conclude, I would caution anyone against wanting to turn the suggestions presented in this article as a "Best Practices" manual for teaching in the multicultural classroom. For me teaching has always been a work in progress, a lifelong journey; there are no carved-in-stone solutions, only context-sensitive approaches tied to the needs of my students.

I'm tired of not being considered "Black enough" to be "really Black". I hate looking in the mirror each morning and facing the fact that today someone will see me for nothing but the colour of my skin.

There is as much diversity of opinion among white Canadians as there is among Black Canadians, Chinese Canadians, etc. In most cases, students of colour have the added challenge (burden) of having to negotiate two or three identities.

Appendix A

Interview with Student From Another Culture

1. Country of origin
2. Length of time in Canada (if appropriate)
3. Family background: number of people in their family, reasons for coming to Canada (economic, refugee, political)
4. Educational background
5. Ask them if they believe that racism exists in Canada; if so, could they give some examples.
6. Ask them if they have been the subject of any racist remarks or have been discriminated against as a result of their race or ethnic background. Ask them how they felt about such incidents and how they dealt with them.
7. Ask them what it means to them to be a Canadian (if they are Canadian) or how they would describe Canada and/or Canadians if they are international students.
8. Ask them if they think becoming a Canadian means that they must give up their culture or can they keep it and still be Canadian.
9. Ask them what they see as the most important differences, if any, between their culture and what they see as mainstream Canadian culture.
10. If they see Canadians as being racist or discriminating against people of other cultures, ask them what can be done to change this?
11. Ask them how they see the future of Canada with its rich mixture of races, cultures and religions.
12. Other: topics that arise in the course of your discussion that you would like to pursue.

If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.

Appendix B

Sample questions from MacIntosh's Questionnnaire

1. I can if I wish arrange to be in company of people of my race most of the time.
2. If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.
3. I can be pretty sure that my neighbours in such locations will be neutral or pleasant to me.
4. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
5. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.
6. When I am told about our national heritage or about 'civilization,' I am shown that people of my colour made it what it is.
7. I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.
8. If I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher for this piece on white privilege.
9. I can go into a music shop and count on finding the music of my race represented, into a supermarket and find staple foods which fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser's shop and find someone who can cut my hair.
10. Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my skin colour not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
11. I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.
12. I can swear, or dress in second-hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race.
13. I can speak in public to a powerful male group without putting my race on trial.
14. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
15. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.

(2000, pp.116-117)

I can swear, or dress in second-hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race.

Appendix C

Preparation of an Inclusive Lesson[6]

A. Assumptions:

- the class is multi-ethnic/racial,
- students (in a mainstream classroom) have varying levels of competence in their L2 including native speakers
- students have been educated in a variety of educational systems and/or raised in different home environments,
- the students have been in Canada for varying lengths of time including students who have been in Canada for generations,

B. Age:

- choose an age-level group that you would like to work with: students you have observed in your visits to the schools, would like to teach, or have taught in various camps, programmes, etc.

C. Topic:

- choose a topic from the regular school curriculum
- choose a topic related to your adult learners

D. Approach

- multicultural (See Bank's four models)
- antiracism

E. Outline a unit with 3 60-minute lessons

- Develop one lesson of your unit detailing:

i)objectives ii)content iii)materials

iv)methodology v)activities v)evaluation

- explain how you will achieve your multicultural or antiracist focus
- explain how you will accommodate diversity in language, culture, educational background/home environments and learning-style

F. Evaluation of the students

- types of evaluation used: formative, summative, performance-based
- portfolios, kid-watching, checklists, etc.
- the progress-mastery dilemma (if an issue)

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www.uia.org/uiadocs/religram.htm

www.culturgram.com

1 For the purposes of this article, I have chosen to use multicultural fully realizing that it is not an inclusive term.

2 I find many of the terms used for people who do not belong to the dominant culture "loaded"; they are infused with stereotypical images of, and attitudes towards people who are members of these groups. Changing terms does not seem to be a solution as, in most cases, the stereotypes and attitudes are transferred to the newest terminology.

Students have been educated in a variety of educational systems and/or raised in different home environments.

Explain how you will accommodate diversity in language, culture, educational background/home environments and learning-style.

3 I would like to acknowledge my debt to Barbara Brockmann and Janet Thomas who designed the course with me the first time it was offered. Many of the techniques evolved as a result of our cooperative efforts.

4 The first time this course was given, we assembled a group of 13 experts; unfortunately, many administrative structures do not lend themselves to such flexibility in terms of team teaching.

5 As space does not permit, I have made this list available on the following website: On the Web, one can also find a large number of outlines for Book Reports or Critical Book Reviews that can be adapted to one's specific needs.

6 Students are given a list of references where they can find sample lessons; as well, I have a bank of student assignments from past years that students can consult.

TESL Ontario is applying for LINC conference assistance for the 2002 TESL Ontario Conference, **Bridges to the Future**, Novemeber 23, 233, at the Toronto Colony Hotel.

If funding is granted, funding priority will be given to LINC instructors who conduct presentations, seminars or workshops at the conference.

Membership to Certified Teachers Is Not Automatic

TESL membership must be renewed annually

Although your certification with TESL Ontario is valid for 5 years, you must maintain your annual TESL Ontario membership. Don't forget to update your membership when your renewal notice arrives in the mail. This will ensure that you will have continued delivery of your affiliate newsletter, *Contact* and the TESL Canada Journal. As of last year, your membership entitles you to a bonus issue featuring the papers presented by symposia presenters from TESL Ontario's 2001 conference.

Helping our Chinese Students

Look on the honour roll or Dean's list of high schools and universities across the province or published marks from the Royal Conservatory of Ontario, and you'll see a pre-dominance of Chinese surnames. But a Toronto educational researcher says that these academically-and achievement-oriented children and young adults are often at a disadvantage when it comes to what she calls oral and socio-emotional skills.

Maria Yau, a Project Coordinator in the Academic Accountability department of the Toronto District School Board, has found that Chinese parents encourage their kids to achieve, sometimes to the point at which the children are stressed out and unhappy at.

"Chinese parents tend not to praise their children, put rather criticize them. Even if the child gets 85%, they'll ask why the mark isn't higher." They also are more likely to enroll their children in skills-building after-school activities such as tutoring, drilling and piano lessons than allow them to just hang out with neighbourhood kids.

These students tend to select maths and sciences over liberal studies subjects because they have never felt comfortable expressing their opinions. "Chinese students will tend not to put up their hand unless they know they will be right," says Yau, who used to teach in Hong Kong. "They are afraid of looking stupid."

Teachers can tell if their Chinese students are being driven too hard at home if they keep to themselves, do not make eye contact, or do not smile. Teachers can help by encouraging these students to speak up in a low-risk situation such as their classroom. Once the student gains confidence, he or she might feel confident enough to join the school debating club or drama production.

Yau, along with parent volunteers in the Greater Toronto Area Chinese community, recently conducted an eight-week educational drama pilot project called LEAP (Learning Expression through Arts and Performance). Thirty students from grades three to nine, were selected by word-of-mouth through our community; local drama teachers were hired to guide the children in role-plays, improvisation, story-making and perspective-taking to help them express themselves, develop creativity, use their imagination and gain social and empathy skills.

At first, Yau says, the children and their parents were skeptical. "The kids thought it would be another study group." But by the time the pilot, consisting of eight Sunday afternoons, finished in December, Chinese parents were clamouring to know how their children could get involved in similar groups.

Although the parents did not observe the sessions, they were invited on the last day to view their kids' video-taped performances.

Yau said that the pilot was hugely successful, but that some parents saw it as another opportunity for skills development and now want to push their children into public speaking. She is planning another drama group to run in the Toronto area for a nominal user fee this April.

How teachers can help

- Encourage Chinese parents to read to their small children in Chinese or English, talk to them and tell them about their family history
- Encourage Chinese parents of older children to let them participate in team sports (instead of individual activities) to build important social skills
- Encourage Chinese parents to praise their children so that they feel valued
- Address errors of Chinese children as a class so that they do not feel singled out when they make a mistake

The need for social skills is now being addressed in Hong Kong, where $14K HK will be spent over the next while to recruit native speakers from English-speaking countries to assist teachers in their schools to help children gain oral and social skills. High school graduates will receive free housing and receive $800/month to 'volunteer' in the classroom in what Yau calls a cultural exchange.

For more information about this program and the drama program, teachers or parents can contact Maria Yau at maria.yau@tdsb.on.ca

"Chinese parents tend not to praise their children, put rather criticize them. Even if the child gets 85%, they'll ask why the mark isn't higher." They also are more likely to enroll their children in skills-building after-school activities such as tutoring, drilling and piano lessons than just hanging out with neighbourhood kids.

"Chinese students will tend to not put up their hand unless they know they will be right," says Yau, who used to teach in Hong Kong. "They are afraid of looking stupid."

TESL Durham

TESL Durham was established in 1994 by a small group of dedicated ESL professionals in Durham Region – an area located just east of Toronto, and including Pickering, Ajax, Whitby and Oshawa.

TESL Durham offers Saturday morning workshops to our membership. For the past several years, professional development workshops have been held at historic Trafalgar Castle School each October and April. Presenters have included our own members and some of the better known "names" in ESL in Ontario such as Fran Marshall and Katherine Brillinger. We have hosted the Dairy Farmers Association and just last year, we were pleased to have Robert Cutting present his ESL/ Literacy textbooks for high school students.

Recently, TESL Durham sponsored a logo design contest to raise our profile among ESL teachers and students.

Recently, TESL Durham sponsored a logo design contest to raise our profile among ESL teachers and students. We were more than pleased by the number of entries received, and the eagerness with which students responded to our request. The design we eventually decided upon had initially taken many of us by surprise with its somewhat "retro" look. However, upon further inspection and consideration of the artist's explanation of the design, we needed to look no further.

We are pleased to display this logo, designed by Liang Ji of Oshawa, proudly alongside the TESL Ontario logo. When we heard Mr. Ji describe his rationale for the design at our Spring AGM, we were clearly reminded of all the wonderful things that we represent to our students. His message confirms all that is good about a multicultural society, in the words of Liang, we are "developing together."

We are pleased to display this logo, designed by Liang Ji of Oshawa, proudly alongside the TESL Ontario logo.

We invite all TESL members in areas surrounding Durham Region to contact us for information about upcoming workshops, and to inquire as to how we can meet your needs.

Jacqueline Jeffers is seen with Logo Designer, Liang Ji.

Community Agency Profile – Muslim Community Services

MUSLIM COMMUNITY SERVICES, (MCS), was established in 1987 as a non-profit community-based social service agency serving the needs of the community within the Greater Toronto Area. MCS is a multi-service agency, managed by a volunteer Board of Directors, focussing on the needs of immigrants, newcomers, refugees and other community members through direct service provision in a manner that facilitates access to community a id social support functions. The agency helps to reduce individual isolation, minimise identified barriers, strengthen community and thus work towards community integration.

MCS is a grass-roots, community-based social service agency that has served the immigrant and newcomer community at large for more than 14 years in the Peel Region. The clients are individuals, families, immigrants, youth, seniors, low-income earners, and the unemployed, who may have social, educational, language and other barriers that limit their full participation in Canadian society. To date, MCS has provided services to more than 58,000 clients.

Over the years, MCS has recognized that immigrants, newcomers and the unemployed have experienced difficulty in securing employment or advancement due to linguistic and cultural barriers, lack of awareness and understanding of the Canadian job market, the need for new technology in the labour market, Canadian norms and work ethic. In order to address these needs, MCS has designed, developed and delivered various skills development services including a mentoring program for immigrants, newcomers, under-employed and the unemployed.

Objectives are achieved through a variety of programs and services designed for the benefit of the broad ethno-racial community and the community at large using such delivery methods as Workshops, Information Sessions, Skills Training, Community – Based Counselling for Abused Women, Women and Youth Support Groups, Settlement And Integration services, Language Training (LINC), Employment Counselling and Referral, Support Through Employment Mentoring Program, (STEMP), as well as access to other services in Peel Region.

Settlement and Integration Services are available by phone, individual or groups. They include:

> form completion, document translation, direct service delivery and follow-up information & Orientation of Newcomers, immigrants and refugees referrals and follow-up, and interpretation and translation services

Women Behind the Veil – This program is uniquely sensitive to the cultural needs of the Muslim Community. While dealing with women's abuse, it considers related issues such as low education, lack of information, low self-esteem, financial dependency, as well as emotional, psychological and social problems of the entire family, especially children. Support and services provided to survivors of violence who are in a state of crisis include crisis counselling, creating a safety plan, emotional support, and information and referral in their own languages. Women are served on a one-on-one basis or in group sessions.

Women Behind the Veil – This program is uniquely sensitive to the cultural needs of the Muslim Community.

Children Exposed to Family Violence Program- This initiative is directed at children who have witnessed women being abused in their homes. It provides early intervention, a safe place for women and children to discuss the violence they have experienced, and offers a healing process and support. This program is a joint-venture with many organizations in Peel Region.

Children Exposed to Family Violence Program- This initiative is directed at children who have witnessed women being abused in their homes.

Support Through Employment Mentoring Program (STEMP) is an innovative program designed to link individuals with professionals from business, industry and academic communities. Participants gain valuable information and career-related advice from industry experts (Mentors). The program is flexible and can accommodate even the busiest schedule. Mentoring can be done on-line, over the phone and/or in person. This program is a joint initiative of the Centre for Education and Training and Muslim Community Services and is supported by Human Resources Development Canada.

Language Instruction to Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program provides basic language training in

one of Canada's official languages to adult immigrants as soon as possible after their arrival in Canada so that they may acquire the necessary language skills to integrate into Canadian society. Supported by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, LINC levels 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 (the largest LINC program in Peel) are offered to newcomers.

ACCESS CENTRE – This centre provides an opportunity to the residents of Peel to use office equipment and upgrade their computer skills. It is geared to retired individuals as well as newcomers looking to gain access to technology and increase their knowledge of current software applications. This partnership program is supported through the agency's own generated resources and is complemented by volunteers who share their expertise in the Information Technology field.

Income Tax Clinic: Annual clinic conducted by volunteer professional accountants and a team from Revenue Canada to assist low-income individuals, seniors, social assistance recipients and newcomers prepare income tax returns. There is no cost to the most needy of the community we serve.

Women's Support Group – This program helps women solve their problems through peer support, networking and information-sharing. Group meetings increase awareness of services and resources available to women and empower them to deal with day-to-day realities. Participants develop higher self-esteem, confidence and language skills for the labour market.

Ahmed Iqbal, Executive Director, Muslim Community Services

Materials for Review

Grouev, Ivaylo ed. *Bullets on the Water: Refugee Stories.* McGill-Queen's University Press.

These stories describe what it means to be a stranger in your homeland and accepting differences in language, religion, culture and traditions in a new one. Refugees reinforce that their move to Canada was a choice dictated by political events, but more importantly because animosity, violence and hatred was completely foreign to them.

Cole, Tom. *The Article Book: Practice Toward Mastering a, an, and the.* The University of Michigan Press, 2000.

This workbook for intermediate learners breaks down explanations of articles into categories then provides exercises as well as quizzes.

Cole, Tom. *Fish Trek: An Adventure in Articles.* The University of Michigan Press. 2000.

This interactive computer game offers six game levels with ten levels of difficulty, print options, tracking of wrong answers and a comprehensive tracking session. Feedback is tailored to the question: not 'right' or 'wrong.' Teachers will enjoy the test generator feature. This software supports the aforementioned Article Book.

Meeting the needs of Muslim students

Ms. Khadija Haffajee is a retired middle-school teacher for the former Carlton Board of Education. She was also the first woman elected to the 27-member Islamic Society of North America, a council that decides the future direction for Muslims in North America. Ms. Haffajee spoke to me in a telephone interview from her home in Ottawa.

Q. What should schools provide for their Muslim students?

A. There should be a private place for prayers, where they can't be disturbed. Part of a library would be fine, preferably carpeted to make it easier on the students for various prayer positions. Students from the age of 10 (voluntary) and from puberty (mandatory) should be allowed 10-15 minutes per day between 12:30 and 1:30 to say their noontime prayers. The prayers are self-directed, with the exception of Friday, when a university student, is invited to give a talk. On this day, the students must pray altogether (so the space has to be big enough to accommodate all of them) and the prayer time is longer.

Afternoon prayers are said after 3:00 usually at home. However, if students participate in after-school activities, a private place should be made available for them so that they can complete their prayers before the extra-curricular event.

There should also be alternative activities for Muslim students who are not allowed to participate in afternoon school dances. Games or other activities should be provided so that they can have fun too.

Q. Should teachers make special allowances for Muslim students?

A. Muslim girls will not participate in swimming lessons unless they are segregated classes. Then, they will wear shorts and T-shirts over bathing suits in public pools. Girls will never be seen in shorts for phys ed but will wear hooded sweat tops and sweat pants. Both boys and girls will be excused from sex education during health class as birth control is not taught in Islam. Dating is not allowed either.

Students will be more active in phys ed classes scheduled in the morning during Ramadan as they will have had breakfast before dawn. If physical activity is scheduled later in the day, they will have less energy. Activities should be moderate as they cannot drink water throughout daylight hours during Ramadan. Remember that the first two days of Ramadan are difficult until the body becomes accustomed to fasting.

It would also help if every lunch period during Ramadan, Muslim students can meet in a supervised non-food environment. Teachers should also make vegetarian pizza and veggie dogs available for parties. Teachers can also invite Muslim students to talk to their classmates about the Ramadan.

Teachers shouldn't allow Muslim students to abuse their privileges. They should always obtain permission to leave the class to pray, and should never use their religious practices as excuses not to do homework or participate in class.

Q. What holy days can teachers expect their Muslim students to be absent?

A. Eid-ul-Fitr – at the end of Ramadan and Eid-ul-Adha – the feast of sacrilege, which coincides with haj – the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. In 2002, Eid-ul-Fitr will occur around the first week of December. Eid-ul-Adha will occur around Feb. 12 in 2003. This latter feast is 3 days, but many parents choose to keep their children home for only the first day.

Ms. Haffajee has been extremely busy speaking to church groups giving talks on what she calls "Islam 101," and answering questions about her faith since September 11, 2001. She told me what she thinks schools should have done in the wake of this disaster.

I don't think schools responded well after September 11. High schools had assemblies but they were too large. There should have been smaller discussion groups. They could have had Muslim parents come in. Instead, some parents were afraid, and many kept their children at home for that week. It's difficult for Muslim students, especially children, when non-Muslim students pick on them, or less overtly, make comments behind their backs.

Brigid Kelso is editor of ***Contact.***

The prayers are self-directed, with the exception of Friday, when a university student, is invited to give a talk. On this day, the students must pray altogether (so the space has to be big enough to accommodate all of them) and the prayer time is longer.

There should also be alternative activities for Muslim students who are not allowed to participate in afternoon school dances. Games or other activities should be provided so that they can have fun too.

Language Profile

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to begin this cultural and linguistic profile with a correction from ALPHA PLUS. They have back issues of **Contact** *beginning with the first profile, Persian, in the Fall, 1992 Vol. 18, # 1 issue(1-800-788-1120 or info@alphaplus.ca). However, you will need to go into their centre to look up the issues you are interested in.*

In keeping with the theme of this **Contact**, *Arabic, which was the third profile in the series(1993), is being re-released in a revised form. Enjoy!*

The intent of the "Language and Cultural Profile" is to raise the awareness and to pique the interest of the readers. So far in this series the following languages have been profiled: Persian, Tamil, Arabic, Somali, Spanish, Tgringa, Amharic, Turkish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Polish, Russian/Ukrainian, Hebrew, Panjabi/Hindi, Tagalog, Albanian, Croatian/Serbian/Bosnian, Armenian and Hungarian.

In this issue a language from the Middle East is being re-profiled, Arabic. I would once again like to thank Mrs. Seza Sarimazian, a teacher with Toronto District School Board who is both a wonderful friend and colleague. She inspires and encourages all in her gentle, unassuming way. As well I would like to thank my niece, Shahnaz Roohani, for her assistance. Thank you both for providing the following information on this language.

Arabic-speaking countries are predominately Muslim, and most Muslim countries are predominately populated by Arabic speakers – Indonesia and Malaysia are notable exceptions.

I would just like to note here that most Arabic-speaking countries are predominately Muslim, and most Muslim countries are predominately populated by Arabic speakers – Indonesia and Malaysia are notable exceptions. Thus, it is very difficult to speak about Arabic on its own as you will see in the following profile just how much the language and religion are intertwined. This comes about from the revelation of the Qur'an toMuhammed by the archangel Gabriel. Muslims believe that the word of God was passed on to Muhammed over a 23-year span of time, and the language that God conveyed the contents of the Qur'an in was Arabic, and, therefore, Arabic is a divine language.

Cathy Haghighat

Arabic

Muslims believe that the word of God was passed on to Muhammed over a 23-year span of time, and the language that God conveyed the contents of the Qur'an in was Arabic, and, therefore, Arabic is a divine language.

HISTORY

Eastern Saudi Arabia was settled in the 4 - 5th millennium BCE by immigrants from southern Iraq. The people were called the Nabateans, and had an empire stretching all the way to Damascus. The early Arabs were nomadic people with a great love for poetry and writing. The Jazm script is the earliest reference to the Arabic script and was built on the Nabataen one.

The earliest known alphabet-scripted language is North Semitic, developed in 1,700 BCE in the area around Palestine and Syria. It consisted of 22 written consonants. Arabic, Hebrew and Phoenician alphabets are based on this model. Arabic itself originated in the Arabian peninsula around the 4th century CE. It descended from the Nabataen alphabet which in turn came from the Phoenician. All Asiatic alphabets originated, like Arabic, from the Aramaic version(the language of Jesus) from the Phoenician while European ones originated directly from the Phoenician. In the 8th century CE, the diacritics (accent marks) were added to the script to indicate short vowels, unmarked grammatical endings and changes in consonants.

The North Arabic script became the script of the Qur'an. This was due to its spread to Hijaz in Arabia where it was used by the aristocracy of Quraysh, the prophet Muhammed's tribe. After the rise of Islam, Arabic developed into a form of calligraphic art.

Other countries also use or used a modified Arabic script – Iran, Pakistan, Ottoman Turkey, Kazakhistan, Uzbekistan as well as other languages using the script at one point or another – Malay, Swahili, Hausa, Algerian Tribal etc.

ARABIC SCRIPT

This beautiful and graceful script is the second most widespread writing system after the Latin scripted one. It is also the fastest writing system by nature of its cursive/connected feature – connected writing that moves forward so that a writer need not raise the pen from the page.

The first revelation to Muhammed commanded " recite in the name of thy Lord... who has taught (the writing) by the pen."(**Surah** 96, al-A'laq, 104). Thus, it is clear how the word is eternal and divine for the Arab. Though Muhammed himself could not read and write, a book was delivered to him which is the miracle visited on Muhammed. In 632, upon the death of Muhammed, the divine revelation ceased. The contents of the Qur'an were passed on to huffaz, people who memorize and recite the complete Qur'an by heart. However, as many huffaz were lost in battle, the Muslim community was disturbed that they would lose this divine revelation. Omar Ibn al-Khattab urged the first caliph, Abu Baker, Muhammed's father-in-law, to set the Qur'an down in written script. Zaid ibn Thabit, secretary to Muhammed, began to collect and compile the revelations into a book. The first versions were written in the Makki and Madani scripts from Mecca and Medina. They were based on the Jazm script. Subsequently, the Kufic and Nashki scripts were used.

Abdul Aswad al Du'ali, famed as the founder of Arabic grammar in the 7th century, invented Tashkeel(vocalization), the system of placing large coloured dots to indicate vowel sounds – black for diacriticals and red or yellow for vocalization. It was very effective in the large and bold Kufic script but cumbersome in the smaller everyday printed script. Governor al Hajjaj ibn Yusuf al Thaqafi enforced a more uniform system to distinguish letters developed by two of al Du'ali's students. Al Khalil ibn Ahmad al Farahidi revised al Du'ali's system further by replacing it with a system that used 6 diacritics to show short vowel sounds, double consonants and to lengthen the **Alef** (A).

The Kufic cursive script existed pre-Islam but was neither regulated nor elegant. It was a secular script. However, under the Ummayads and Abbasids the court required a refinement and codification of a script for record-keeping and official documents. Abu Ali Muhammed Ibn Muqlah, along with his brother, was given the task of devising a system that could be followed. Ibn Muqlah, as vizier under three caliphs, developed a script that followed strict proportional rules. He used the dot as a measuring unit for line proportions and a circle with a diameter that equaled the height of the **Alef** for letter proportions. It was this system that elevated the script into an art form.

The calligraphic script has since been divided into two main families: **Kufic**, the dry style and **Naskhi, Thuluth, Nastaliq**, examples of the soft/moist, cursive ones.

Kufic originated from Kufah in Mesopotamia (Iraq) near the end of the 7th century CE . It is the heavy, bold but elegant script used in metal and stone inscriptions. It is also the script of the Qur'an, literature and calligraphy as well as architecture – ie, writing on mosques. It is composed of square and angular lines with compact, bold, circular forms. Vertical stokes are short and horizontal ones long and extended. It is highly decorative and uses the diacritics. In the 10th century, Eastern Kufic used slender vertical strokes and became the style for ceramics and book calligraphy. Later, on architectural monuments, serifs were added to the early Kufic style and leaf-like ornaments appeared at the end of strokes. These strokes were then added to round ones and the Foliate Kufic style became popular on buildings.

By the 11th century, the letters themselves changed and were used to produce ornaments and new geometric patterns were added to the script – plaiting, knotting and braiding. For example, a line of poetry or lines from the Qur'an could be written into imperial seals or take shapes of objects such as ships, but all were drawn in script.

In the 14th century, Square Kufic developed, a script used to cover entire buildings.

Naskhi, "copying" was the script used for writing on paper or papyrus, and is the script of Modern Arabic. It began in Mecca and Medina in the 10th century. It was refined in Turkey by the 16th century. It is also used for the writing of the Qur'an. It is legible and clear and is the style of typesetting and printing. Nowadays, it is the every day script used for writing as well as in newspapers, books and school. It is a small script with thin lines and rounded letter shapes. It can be plain and unadorned with no diacritics.

Thuluth is a very impressive, stately script that developed with Mamluk Thuluth. It can be found on monuments, glass, metalwork, textiles, wood and in books for titles.

It is also the fastest writing system by nature of its cursive/connected feature – connected writing that moves forward so that a writer need not raise the pen from the page.

Though Muhammed himself could not read and write, a book was delivered to him which is the miracle visited on Muhammed.

Nastaliq was developed by Mir Ali Sultan al Tabriz and refined in Iran in the 14 - 15th centuries. It is a fluid and expressive script used in the writing of poetry, miniatures, romantic and mystical epics such as the **Shahnameh** (*Book of Kings*), but not for the Qur'an. **Nastaliq** has short verticals, without serifs, coupled with deep, curved horizontals. By and large the script slants to the right in contrast to the above scripts that slant to the left.

COLLOQUIAL ARABIC

Arabic is spoken by approximately 200 million people in more than 22 countries. As Arabic is the official language of many countries and the religious language of Muslims, there are numerous oral and written variations. An example of this is of a young Syrian who was in my pronunciation class. His greatest difficulties were with the two "TH"'s which he pronounced as "Z" or "S". Eventually, he was able to correct his problem. He left the course "TH"anking me for helping him pronounce his mother tongue "correctly". In the Arabic of the Qur'an, the TH's exist as they do in English, but Syrian speakers have difficulties articulating these sounds.

Arabic is spoken by approximately 200 million people in more than 22 countries.

Although classical Arabic has changed little over time, colloquial Arabic has. Spoken Arabic has two main groups: **Khaliji** and **Shami.**

Khaliji is used by those who live in the Gulf states and their Arabic closely resembles the written text. It is often referred to as Classical or Literary Arabic.

Shami, Colloquial Arabic, refers to all other Arabic-speaking groups and the speech patterns can vary widely from the written text. Cairo Arabic is such an example.

Basically, Modern Standard Arabic is used for reading, writing and formal speech and is based on the Qur'an. It is seen as proper and "correct" Arabic as opposed to the colloquial, seen as slang and a dialect. Even though Arabs see Modern Standard Arabic as the preferred form, it is also the learned form that is no one's mother tongue.

	ENGLISH	ARABIC
LANGUAGE FAMILY	Indo-European (Germanic branch)	Hamito-Semitic (Arabo-Canaanite sub branch)
WRITING SYSTEM	- alphabet, Latin script	- alphabet,Naskhi-cursive/Kufic-Qur'an
	- non-phonetic	- phonetic
	- written from left to right	- written from right to left
	- letters disconnected	- letters mostly connected
	- printed/written script	- ornamental and non-ornamental scripts
# OF LETTERS	- 26 consonants	- 25 consonants
	- 6 vowels (3 written)	- 3 long vowels
	- 6 diacritics	- mostly for short vowels
	- 8 diacritics	- used to change letter shapes

In the Arabic of the Qur'an, the TH's exist as they do in English, but Syrian speakers have difficulties articulating these sounds.

N.B. In total Arabic has 28 letters, but their shapes change depending on the letter's position in the word – initial, medial or final. Of the basic 18 letter shapes, 2 are used for 3 letters, 6 are used for 2 letters and the remainder have one shape each. Dots are added and their position and number on the shape change the letter.

VOWELS	- 15-16 (spoken) - 6 written	- 6 (spoken) - 3 written
DIFFERENT CONSONANTS	- TH(this/the) - V/NG(sing)/P	- GH(Haghighat) - 2 types - non-Gulf states only - KH (Khomeini) - guttural sounds, velarized consonants

	ENGLISH	ARABIC
CAPITALIZATION	- begin new sentences with capitals	- words end in "capital" letters
COMBINATION OF LETTERS	- each syllable has a a vowel/consonant sound many consonant clusters	- consonant + vowel(initial) - long vowel + consonant(final) - final may have 2 consonants

N.B. Arabic vocabulary is made up of a word scheme that consists of a triconsonantal root that provides the meaning and the pattern provided by the vowels that give its grammatical meaning. These roots provide the lexical group of related vocabulary.
EX: the triconsonantal root **S-L-M** refers to words that are related to submission, religion, peace – a**SLaM**a, i**SLaM**, mu**SLiM**, **SaLaM**.

The triconsonantal root **S-L-M** refers to words that are related to submission, religion, peace – a**SLaM**a, i**SLaM**, mu**SLiM**, **SaLaM**.

Shift in vowels changes the meaning through the grammar.
EX:-K-T-B is related to writing – **KiTaB** "**book**", **KaTiB** "**clerk**" or one who writes.

NUMBERS	- written from left to right	- written from right to left, but added from left to right
EXAMPLE:	73 + 62 135	37 + 26 531 (read from right to left)

N.B. This can cause confusion for learners when they first do math equations as they attempt to solve the problem from the "wrong side" or record the answer "backwards".

ORDER		
sentence	- subject + verb + object - time words appear at the end or beginning of the sentence	- verb + subject + object
adjective	- adjective + noun	- noun + adjective
ARTICLES/NOUNS		
indefinite	- a, an + noun	- noun(masc./fem.)
definite	- the + noun	- **al** + noun(masc./fem.)

Arabic has 2 noun categories – masculine (no ending), feminine (h ending).

K-T-B is related to writing – **KiTaB** "**book**", **KaTiB** "**clerk**" or one who writes.

VERBS	- subject is separate - verb only inflected for some (to be) and in some tenses (continuous/present)	- subject added to the verb - uses suffixes on root - diacritics can also be used to change the verb modifier
PRONOUNS		
subject	- always written	- suffix to the verb, can also be written on its own + verb Suffix - diacritics can also be used to change the subject

N.B. In Arabic the pronoun, **you**, has 5 forms:

SINGULAR: masc. and fem.
PLURAL: masc., fem. and mixed.

object	- differs from subject - appears after the verb	- suffix - after the noun

	ENGLISH	ARABIC
possessive (adj.)	- differs from the above - appears before the noun	- noun suffix, agrees on gender and number
PLURALS	- adds suffix s/es/ies - has a few irregular forms	- "broken plural"- plural shown by internal vowel change in word - learnt by rote - plurals of non-human nouns are feminine

N.B. In Arabic, numbers under 10 have a plural form. **EX:** 2 cats; those above 10 have a singular form. **EX:** 10 cat

In Arabic, numbers under 10 have a plural form. **EX:** 2 cats; those above 10 have a singular form. **EX:** 10 cat.

TENSES	- 3 forms of the verb, present,past,past part. tenses changed by + ed, or whole word, or use of "to be"/"to have"	- 2 forms perfect + suffixes = past, imperfect + suffixes = present and future - can be reduced to one word and will show tense, subject and object
COMMANDS	- infinitive form of the verb	- infinitive + prefix "**A**" - subject indicated by suffix (masc/fem.)
? FORM	- question word/auxiliary verb - question word + verb + subject	- "**HEL**" + verb + subject(yes/no) - verb + subject/question word
NEGATIVE FORM	- use auxiliary verbs - to be + not	- "**LA**" + word/verb negated **EX: "la ilaha illa al-Lah"** *There is no God but one God.* (opening to the **Shaddah**)
VERB/2ND VERB	- verb + to + infinitive	- verb + infinitive
MODALS	- modal + infinitive (no "to")	- no true modal structure - impersonal pronoun use (one... .) and preposition or noun synonym used (must = necessity)
FORMALITY LEVELS	- 3 levels levels changed by use of modals and longer sentence structures	- 3 levels - formal style of Qur'an
SWEARING/OATHS	- involves the subjects of sex/bodily functions - directed at family, not the person	- family lineage - compared to dogs/pigs

A phrase often used hoping that an event will come to pass is **Inshallah** – *God willing*.

ARABIC BLESSINGS

Blessing given upon family, business and life by invoking the names of the prophets/God

A phrase often used hoping that an event will come to pass is **Inshallah** – *God willing*.

VOCABULARY/ FOREIGN INFLUENCE	- higher level of writing - Greek/Latin through the use of stems and affixes	- can take any foreign word and from its meaning create a new Arabic word - foreign words like philosophy can become **al-filosfy**

N.B. It is usually very difficult for Arabic to incorporate foreign loan words, especially verbs, as foreign words cannot be fitted into the triconsonantal word scheme seen earlier. French has been very influential in Lebanon, Syria and Northern Africa while English has been influential in the Gulf and the Horn of Africa.

Arabic words are also found in Turkish, Persian, Portuguese and Spanish.

	ENGLISH	ARABIC
LEARNING OF WRITING/ READING	- word recognition, phonics, syllables	- whole alphabet, then small words/sentences - phonics
SKILLS OF READING/ WRITING	- heavily dependent on sight recognition	- phonics - grammar rules by rote

N.B. Most items, letters, correspondence, and notes written by devote Muslims are headed by the inscription "BISMALLAH -EL RAH-MAN EL RAHIM" (In the name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate – from the Fatihah -the opening Surah of the Qur'an).

It is usually very difficult for Arabic to incorporate foreign loan words, especially verbs, as foreign words cannot be fitted into the triconsonantal word scheme seen earlier.

SPECIAL NOTES

EDUCATION

Compulsory education is dependent on the Arabic-speaking country. Segregated schools at all levels occur in the Gulf states. Other countries have the sexes integrated at various levels.

As a further note here about culture and education, it has been said that God delivered a book to the Arabs to acknowledge their reverence for the printed word. Muhammed was quoted as saying that "*the ink of the scholars is worth more than the blood of martyrs*" (**Hadith**). It was due to this thirst and reverence for knowledge that much of the science, technology, and philosophy was preserved and passed on to the West. This was due to the Islamic Empire that enjoyed its golden age from the 8th to the 13th century. Al-Mamun, a Caliph from 813-833, established the "*House of Wisdom/ Translation*" (**BAYT-AT HIKMA**). He asked for Greek texts from the Byzantine emperor of the time and had the works of Plato, Aristotle and their contemporaries translated from Greek and Aramaic into Arabic. Arabic became the common language of science, art, literature, philosophy, medicine, mathematics... Higher mathematics was only made possible by the Arabic contribution of the addition of the zero or null. Our numerical system is based on the Arabic one and not the Roman. This empire also replaced papyrus with paper which they had learnt how to make from the East. By the 9th century when Europe could boast only of its 36 volumes in a monastery in St. Gall, 500,000 volumes existed in Arabic in a library in Cordova. Many Christian, Jewish and Muslim academics came to study there and in Baghdad. At one point these scholars studied more in Arabic than in Latin.

LITERATURE/ART

In many of the Arabic-speaking countries, the oral tradition of poetry is held in high esteem. The ultimate form lies in the reading of the Qur'an.

Art is expressed through geometric shapes and mosaics. No images of humans nor animals are used in religious art to avoid idol worship. When human forms are depicted in miniatures or illuminated texts, the faces of religious figures and prophets are shown veiled. In more orthodox Islam, the use of a physical form is avoided as the creation of it by an artist would imply creation of an image of which God alone is solely capable of.

Muslim students in our art classes may show a reluctance to draw images and some may even refuse to be photographed for the above reason.

Therefore, in place of drawn images, calligraphy has been raised to a fine religious art form glorifying the texts from the Qur'an. Calligraphy was brought to new heights by the Sufis (religious mystics). The best Arabic calligraphers are from Pakistan.

A well-known Arabic poet in the West is the Lebanese poet and philosopher, Kahlil Gibran.

CALLIGRAPHY

For Arabic calligraphy, reed and brush pens (with 24 hairs from a donkey) scissors, a knife to cut the pens, an ink pot and a sharpening tool as

Higher mathematics was only made possible by the Arabic contribution of the addition of the zero or null. Our numerical system is based on the Arabic one and not the Roman.

well as paper are needed. The reed pen is called a "qalam". The best reed pens are from the coastal regions of the Persian Gulf. They are a treasured and valued commody traded across the Muslim world. Some have been buried with famous calligraphers. Ink can be many colours, but black and brown are the most common due to their contrastive value. The inks made by Persians, Turks and Indians were the most treasured as they stayed fresher longer. Some inks were even perfumed. The importance of writing can be seen in the similes used – the pen to human life in God's hand and ink as the water of life. Paper came to the Middle East from China via Samarkand. Paper was made from cotton and occasionally silk or other fibers but not wood. The paper is polished and smoothed with agate or jade before it is written on.

Geometry is essential to calligraphy in Arabic. Calligraphy is based on proportions which are based on the **Alef**, the first letter of the alphabet, which consists of a vertical line. The dot is the unit of measurement. The dot equals the square impression left by the tip of the reed pen when pressed onto the paper. The calligrapher has to decide on the script s/he is using and then proceed. The height of the alef, depending on script style, could be 3 to 12 dots high. The width of the Alef is one dot across. From there the other letter shapes will be formed using this Alef odule(standard). The Alef is also used as the diameter of an imaginary circle. Thus, the calligrapher has to consider these 3 factors: height and width of the **Alef** and the imaginary circle. For the **Naksh** script the **Alef** is 5 dots high; **Thuluth**, 9 dots with a **maddah** (hook) of 3 dots on top. Each character then has a head, body and tail, and they are interrelated in position, direction and spacing.

TAJ MAHAL/BUILDINGS

During the Mughal reign of Shah Jahan, the Taj Mahal was erected in Agra, India. The calligraphic inscriptions and geometric designs were made by

Arabic for Allah written in round medallions on mosque walls

Arabic for Muhammed in round medallions - as counterpart to Allah - on mosque walls

Pg. 170 "Islam from Within"

FIGURE 5. Surah 17:80, the two lower lines written above in the form of a ship. (From Education and Community Relations, May/June 1976, vol. 6, no. 3. Reproduced by permission of the Commission for Racial Equality, London.)

Surah 17:80 - verse that likens the sayer to a captain of a ship who enters and exits truth and that the truth of God is great.

Pg. 157 "Islam from Within"

the famous Iranian calligrapher, Amanat Khan from Shiraz. He is also credited with the Akbar mausoleum at Sikandra and Madrasah Shahi Mosque at Agra.

CALENDAR

Many Arabic countries, due to trade with the West, will make use of our traditional solar calendar. However, the Islamic calendar is a 12 month lunar one. Each month begins at the start of a new moon. Each month has 29.5 days (364 days per year). Muharram is the month that begins the year and is sacred. Ramadan is the 9th month, which begins and ends with a crescent moon, and is the month for fasting from sunrise to sunset. No food nor water is to be consumed during those hours. Travelers, the infirm and pregnant women are exempted. During a woman's menstrual cycle she cannot fast as she is considered to be "unclean" and will fast the days she has missed at another time in the year. Dhu-al-Hijja is the last month of the Islamic year.

The Islamic calendar is dated from "**HIJRA**" – the migration of Muhammed from Mecca to Medina in 622 CE. 2002 begins the year 1423 AH (Anno Hegira the year of the Migration). Thus, this year would be written 1423 AH.

HOLIDAYS

Friday is a day of rest, and schools, government offices and businesses close for the afternoon. The business week usually runs from Saturday to Wednesday with Thursday and Friday being the "weekend". During Ramadan work stops in the afternoons.

- EID-UL-ADHA (Festival of Sacrifice) is the most important holy day. It concludes the act of pilgrimage and commemorates Abraham's offering of his son to God. It is this act of submission that makes Abraham the first "Muslim"(one who submits) for Muslims.

The meat of sacrificed animals is distributed among the poor and needy.

- **EID-UL-FITR** (*Festival of the Breaking of the Fast*) is the next most important holy day and marks the end of Ramadan.
- Other holidays are **NISFU-SHABAAN** (Middle of the month of SHABAAN – *Night of Repentance*) celebrated in preparation of the beginning of Ramadan. Two weeks later, on the sighting of the new moon, Ramadan begins.
- **RAMADAN** is the fasting month.
- **MUHARRAM** starts the Islamic new year and celebrates the **HIJRA**.
- **LAILAT-UL-QADR** (*Night of Power*) commemorates the first revelation of the Qur'an to Muhammed in 610 CE .

NAMES

Muslim children are named after the prophets and Muhammed's relatives, and in some countries most of the Muslim male children are given the first name of Muhammed and then their given name (Syria and Afghanistan follow this tradition). Muslim girls are quite often named after the female relations of Muhammed. The first male child's parents take the child's name. If Reza and Fatima have a boy, and call him Ibrahim, Reza now is called **Abu-Ibrahim** (*Father of Ibrahim*), and Fatima is now referred to as **Umm-Ibrahim** (*Mother of Ibrahim*).

Another ritual of Arab Muslims is the **Tasmiyah**, *Name-Giving Ceremony*. On the 7th day of the birth of the child, the **Adhan** is whispered into his/her right ear, the call to prayer. In the left ear the **Iqamah** is whispered, the last warning for prayer. This is to remind the child of his/her obligation to pray. Then one of the many names for the Prophet Muhammed is chosen or the suffix '**Abd** (*servant of*) + one of the 99 names of God which appear in the Qur'an. Example: '**Abdrahman** = *the servant of God*.

Among the various Muslim groups certain names are either used or not and for historical reasons. For example, Ali is a very common name among **Shi'a** Muslims and not **Sunni**. **Shi'a** means *the party of Ali* and followers believe in religious affiliation attributed to direct descendants of Muhammed for their spiritual leadership (an Imam) of which Ali was. **Sunnis** do not. Omar is a **Sunni** name that **Shi'as** would not use due to a dispute involving Omar.

There is also the spelling of the name Muhammed or Mohamed, or Muhamed or Mohammad.... As written before, Arabic is a consonantal language, and so the name Muhammed is actually written as **mhmd** with a diacritic written over the 2nd **m** to indicate a double consonant. The problem lies in the **Shami** or Colloquial Arabic that the transcriber speaks which could also be influenced by the country's ties to English or French. Thus, the added vowels will differ depending on the pattern chosen by the transcriber – this is also seen when Chinese is transcribed into Latin script.

The business week usually runs from Saturday to Wednesday with Thursday and Friday being the "weekend".

EID-UL-ADHA (Festival of Sacrifice) is the most important holy day. It concludes the act of pilgrimage and commemorates Abraham's offering of his son to God. It is this act of submission that makes Abraham the first "Muslim"(one who submits) for Muslims.

CIRCUMCISION

A Muslim child is circumcised at the age of 7 when he no longer needs the immediate care of his mother and can now associate with other men and is of the age to receive a formal education.

WEDDINGS

In traditional Arabic Islamic weddings, the guests receive presents at the ceremony. The groom provides the bride price that will become the property of the bride should they divorce. He also pays for the wedding. At a very religious ceremony, the women and men are separated and have separate festivities – this includes the bride and groom. To make a suitable match a marriage broker is used. In the traditional Gulf States it is not uncommon for betrothals to occur at birth, and it is seen as a blessing and ordained by God that first cousins should marry. However, as these countries have more interaction with the West, these givens are being questioned and challenged by the new generations.

A Muslim child is circumcised at the age of 7 when he no longer needs the immediate care of his mother and can now associate with other men and is of the age to receive a formal education.

** OTHER RESOURCES **

Canadian Arab Federation
5298 Dundas St. W.
Etobicoke M9B 1B2
(416) 231-7746

Arab Canadian Club of Toronto
54 Fieldcroft Crt.
Maple L6A-1J3
832-3158

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Ask Jeeves – ***A History of the Arabic Language***

Brian Bishop

Linguistics 450

April 24, 1998

In traditional Arabic Islamic weddings, the groom provides the bride price that will become the property of the bride should they divorce. He also pays for the wedding.

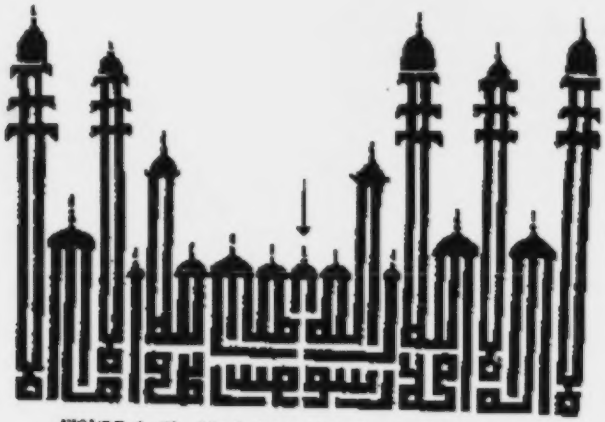

FIGURE 4. The Islamic Shahadah with an artist's ingenuity. (From Islamic Studies, Institute of Islamic Research, Islamabad, Pakistan. Reproduced by permission.)

Shaddah - confession of faith " there is no God but one God and Muhammad is the prophet of God. The artist attempted a mirror image whereby it reads from both outer minarets to the middle where the arrow is.
Pg. 156 "Islam from Within"

Teaching in Oman

Cathryn Colp

I had never met an Omani until I dashed into Kinko's on Bloor to pick up a fax.

"Ah, Sultan Qaboos University!" said the clerk excitedly as he handed me the job offer. "That's in my country. I'm thinking of going back there." It was kismet. I was destined to be in Oman.

Yet, I knew nothing about this country. No one I knew had been there, most had never even heard of it, and very little recent information was available on this low-profile neighbour of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Even the telephone operator had to ask me where it was.

Shortly after midnight on September 1, 1997, I arrived in Oman to teach English. It was not long before I realized that this place was in fact one of the world's best-kept secrets. Its varied landscape and tolerant society make for a very pleasant place to live and work. Unlike the vast desert kingdoms and small city-states of this region, the Sultanate of Oman offers more than just a sea of sand dunes. With its majestic mountains and fjords in the north, its lush southern coast blessed by annual monsoons, and its long, white, unpolluted beaches all along the Arabian Sea coastline, it provides plenty to explore on weekends and holidays. Oman is also a paradise for bird-watchers and scuba divers. Despite rapid modernization over the past 30 years, the country has incorporated traditional Arabian architecture into its development, thus avoiding that *nouveau-riche* feel found in other parts of the region.

Successful blending of the modern and the traditional is also reflected in Omani society. While maintaining conservative Muslim values, the laws and customs allow for some diversity. Expatriate women, for example, are not required to cover their hair, though moderate dress (cover the knees, cover the shoulders) is appreciated. Given the climate – virtually 360 days of cloudless skies and temperatures ranging from 20 to 49 degrees Celsius – I would love to wear what the men wear: a long white cotton robe called a dishdasha, but that would be contravening two unwritten social codes: impersonating an Omani and cross-dressing!

Local laws also allow non-Muslims to obtain a license to purchase liquor in small windowless shops with vague company names such as "African and Eastern." The international hotels, a large part of the expatriate social scene, also serve alcohol, except during Ramadhan and other religious holidays. A few Christian churches have been built here, and pork is available in a small room labeled "non-Muslims only" at the back of the supermarkets. Somehow it has the illicit feel of an adult book room. Nonetheless, it prevents expatriates from feeling deprived, and at the same time avoids "contamination" of the local culture.

The university campus lies just outside the Capital Area, which is a string of built-up areas along a busy dual highway on the coast leading to Muscat about 50 kilometres away. Some staff live off campus, but my husband and I enjoy not commuting. Free furnished accommodation is provided on or off campus depending upon availability. The center of the campus is set up like one of those phony towns on maps that we use in beginner ESL classes to teach the prepositional phrases for directions: a bank, a grocery store, a post office, a stationery shop – and of course a mosque – all neatly arranged at one end of the academic buildings which are all linked by endlessly symmetrical archways flanked by park benches, palm trees and fountains. In fact, the layout is so symmetrical that if you take a wrong turn from the centre, you may unwittingly end up at a building diametrically opposite your destination. Only if you can read the ornate gold lettering in Arabic will you realize that you are standing in front of the wrong building!

The academic areas of the university are connected by two-storey walkways where female students generally ply the second floor and everyone else the ground floor. However, all classes are coeducational, with the women, all clad in black abayas, seated at the back and the men, all in their white dishdashas, at the front. Generally, we teach 20 hours a week in two-hour blocks, with classes of 20 to 25. Most students who enter the university need at least one semester of intensive English before starting their academic courses in the me-

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All classes are coeducational, with the women, all clad in black abayas, seated at the back and the men, all in their white dishdashas, at the front.

dium of English. Students lead a relatively stress-free life on campus. All tuition, books, accommodation and meals are provided free.

Established by the British, the Language Centre largely equates curriculum with textbooks. Luckily, we happen to be using some very good textbooks at the moment and the students here are a joy to work with. As long as the sexes are not required to mix, they are open to most types of language learning activities such as pair work, group work, presentations, interviews, surveys and debates. Hot debate topics here are: "Omani men are more influenced by Western culture than women," and "Women should not work after they are married." Films also work well if they don't contain too much bare flesh or kissing. Animated Disney flicks are usually a hit.

The three key ingredients to successful teaching here in Oman are relationship, relationship, relationship.

The three key ingredients to successful teaching here in Oman are relationship, relationship, relationship. Omanis place a high value on social and family ties, so it is essential for students to have some sort of personal context within which to interact with their teachers. Although they have the wondrous innocence of 12-year-olds – indeed it is sometimes difficult to think of them as 18 or 19-year old men and women – they are very mature in terms of their respect and consideration of others. Despite – or maybe because of – their uniformity of dress, they have a keen appreciation of other people's personalities and strive to avoid interpersonal conflict. Anger and arrogance are taboo, whereas incompetence, inefficiency and laziness are entirely forgivable and sometimes even irrelevant. As long as my students maintain these traditional cultural traits, I find them a breeze to deal with. One day, for example, some students were marching around campus protesting a rumour they'd heard about abolishing graduation ceremonies. When my class heard the chanting outside the classroom door, they all looked at me pleadingly.

Anger and arrogance are taboo, whereas incompetence, inefficiency and laziness are entirely forgivable and sometimes even irrelevant.

"Would you like to join them?" I asked. Their eyes lit up. They had not dared to walk out at the risk of offending me.

"Okay," I said, "you can have 10 minutes." Out they ran and back they were in 10 minutes!

With their childlike innocence, these students are also fairly easy to amuse. Once, after being asked for the third time to explain the meaning of the second conditional, I finally said,

"Okay, look: If Abdul were a lady . . " Already, there was a wave of snickering throughout the class, even from Abdul himself.

"If Abdul WERE a lady . . ." I repeated. Choking back giggles, students awaited the punch-line with bated breath.

". . . he would marry Ahmed." Gales of laughter, Abdul and Ahmed doubled over with tears in their eyes. The women tittered uncontrollably into their abayas, trying to hide their unladylike snorts. I never had to explain second conditional again.

At present, I am teaching in the English for English Specialists program. My students are destined to be translators, hospitality personnel and English teachers – possibly even my colleagues! Unlike some of the other programs which tend to be dry and functional, this program allows for discussion of culture and ideas, giving me insight into the hearts and minds of my students. At times, I am even able to see beyond the black and white cultural norms which are visually represented by the sea of white at the front of the class and the black at the back of the class. Through classroom discussions and essays, I discover some intriguing non-conformist (for this society) ideas – the men who argue that husbands should help with the housework, the women who insist that husbands and wives must have similar education in order to have a happy marriage, and the woman who was upset when her father slaughtered a goat for the Feast. "I liked that goat," she wrote. Highly unusual for a society with virtually no vegetarians in it.

I have also learned more about my students perceptions of reality. Last year, for example, I watched one of my female students wither away in my class, becoming so ill she would cry, but doctors could find nothing wrong with her. When she stopped coming to class, I asked after her.

"Miss," one of her friends finally told me, "it's Envy. Samia looked very beautiful at her brother's wedding – more beautiful than the bride – and some of the old ladies didn't like it." In another class, my students advised me to be careful with cats as they could be your relative or neighbour – and they all had stories to prove it:

"My neighbour shot a cat and the bullet went into its shoulder. The next day his grandfather had a bullet in his shoulder." To this anecdote, an American colleague responded in her classy, deadpan drawl: "Y'all have to be careful if those cats

come swishin' around yer legs, lookin' up yer skirt."

Outside of teaching, I find myself more involved in the expatriate circuit. It is possible to mix with the local culture, and it is certainly appreciated if an attempt is made to learn Arabic. However, there is little real need for it on a daily basis because most signs and businesses are in both Arabic and English.

Much of expatriate social life is centred around the seaside international hotels here which provide some excellent restaurants, bars, and health clubs. They also host special events such as dinner theatre, concerts and club balls. Concerts on the beachside lawn of the InterContinental Hotel are marvelous entertainment. Under the stars and palm trees, hundreds of expatriates gather to enjoy their old favourites pumped out by ersatz bands doing such acts as Buddy Holly, ABBA and the Beatles. Real but recycled bands, such as Gary and (his much younger) Pacemakers have also made an appearance at the Palm Gardens, and even the real and up-to-date Bryan Adams paid us a visit last spring. Where else in the world can you see this guy in anything more intimate than a football stadium?

Some of these international hotels also provide facilities for water sports such as diving, snorkeling and windsurfing. For the less sporty, the Muscat chapter of the Hash House Harriers offers weekly run/walk excursions which culminate in sunset picnics and serious drinking. Camping and off-road four-wheel drive expeditions are also popular pastimes.

By now, you may have gotten the impression that most of us have a lot of free time on our hands. In fact, that's mostly true for most people here. Maid service is relatively inexpensive and holidays here are done up right! Not one day for National Day, but two. Sometimes students just take the whole week off. After Ramadhan, Eid is at least three or four days and in fact this year we had the whole week off just before Christmas. The second Eid, which falls about two months later, is expected to be longer, though we never know the dates until they are announced at the last moment. At the university, we also have 60 days annual leave – with tickets provided to make sure we take it – so we can't really complain if we have to work on Christmas Day.

Despite the tragic world events of this past autumn, life pretty much goes on here as before. At the beginning, there was some tension. Omani colleagues who had been on study leave overseas returned early to the Language Centre. Other teachers, who come from all nations (except one) that have been in the media spotlight, became highly sensitized to the various perspectives on the events. Being right on the flight path, our classes were frequently interrupted by noisy grey-green aircraft. Each time it was like hitting the pause button: 20 pairs of eyes fixed on me as I could do nothing but stare back at them, while we all held our breath. Students were itching to discuss the issues in class, but politics, along with sex and religion, is understood to be a taboo topic and we had to discourage it. I wasn't sure who thought what, but skeptical of all media, I was positive that none of us knew the whole truth about anything. Thus, after the first few weeks, discussions at the Faculty Club lunch table reverted to the usual expatriate topics such as speculating when the holiday dates would be announced and arranging four-wheel drive trips into the desert. I carried on teaching and students carried on obsessing over their grades. Only in the writing class did I catch glimpses of what they might be feeling. Practising her complex sentences, one student wrote: "I don't sleeping because I very worry that maybe the war is coming." From another student, a more grammatically accurate effort: "Westerners don't like Muslims as it is believed they are all terrorists." Looking up at me sadly as I read over his shoulder, his eyes searched mine for empathy and understanding.

Whatever the media may or may not convey, truthfully or wildly out of context, I am very certain – and many of my colleagues agree – that I am much safer as a Westerner here than I would be as an Arab in the West.

It is possible to mix with the local culture, and it is certainly appreciated if an attempt is made to learn Arabic.

"Westerners don't like Muslims as it is believed they are all terrorists." Looking up at me sadly as I read over his shoulder, his eyes searched mine for empathy and understanding.

A Primer for Teaching Overseas

By Gregory Strong

The experience of living and working abroad is a life-enhancing one. The chance to teach in a new part of the world and to participate in another culture can only enlarge a teacher's perspectives on the world, let alone on his or her career. For couples with children, their time overseas may well be the great adventure of their lifetime. The people one meets and the experiences one has can be extraordinary.

Teaching in a new culture is like beginning a new life: even the smallest things can be of great interest because they are done differently.

Teaching in a new culture is like beginning a new life: even the smallest things can be of great interest because they are done differently. One university professor commented to me, "Everything else in my life is B.C. – before China." Among my own special experiences, I number a cameo performance in a Chinese opera, jogging along the Great Wall, meditation in a Zen temple, and an appearance on Japan's NHK television. Finally, an overseas experience can help one to better appreciate the social and economic privileges of living in Canada.

New professional and even financial opportunities may arise while working an another country. Because English has become the lingua franca of business and science, there is a shortage of native speakers who can teach English. As a result, a relatively inexperienced teacher may end up as a school supervisor, a textbook writer, even a tenured professor at a national university. New information appears at websites like the wellknown Dave's ESL Café (www.eslcafe.com/jobs) or at sites like www.eslworldwide.com and www.geocities.com/Tokyo/Flats/7947/eflasia.htm all the time.

More importantly, to live abroad, far from one's family and friends to work in a foreign language can be stressful psychologically.

Furthermore, there are tax advantages for those who spend at least two calendar years overseas. Instead of paying taxes in two different countries, they may become non-resident Canadians, provided they meet certain requirements such as renting or selling their real estate property in Canada. Their new country may have lower rates of taxation, so they may realize substantially greater financial gains than they would in Canada.

Negative aspects exist, too, of course. Although teachers can make bigger salaries and obtain higher positions earlier in their career than they might if they remained in Canada, their experience overseas is rarely acknowledged on their return home. Unfortunately, the pay steps in the public school or college system are based on years of service within a particular school district or college. One's years working abroad do not count. In addition, teachers living overseas have to plan their own retirement funds. For reasons such as these, some people working internationally either take a leave from their school districts, or stay abroad indefinitely.

More importantly, to live abroad, far from one's family and friends to work in a foreign language can be stressful psychologically. The situation calls for a special personality. In a study of 277 Canadian technical assistance advisors working in 20 developing countries, Kealey (1990) found that the most effective were those interacting with their new cultural environment, learning the language, and building relationships. Hachey (2000) emphasizes similar interpersonal skills of "flexibility, respect for different cultures, sensitivity and attentiveness to other people, and positive attitudes toward cooperation" in *The Canadian Guide to Working and Living Abroad* which also lists many contacts for working abroad.

Overseas teaching opportunities exist for every level of experience, from the recent university graduate to the experienced teacher, and college lecturer. At the entry level, there are aid programs in the developing world and conversational schools in the major cities of many countries. For those with professional certification and experience, the international school system discussed in this article, offers an attractive environment. As the economies of eastern Europe and of Asia continue their development, new language teaching opportunities arise. In countries such as Japan, demand remains very high for English language teachers although qualifications have become increasingly important.

Government Aid and NGOs

It is beyond the scope of this short article to describe even a small number of the many posi-

tions available with NGOs, let alone at private schools. *The Canadian Guide to Working and Living Overseas (2000)* is an excellent place to start a search. It lists the mailing addresses for many NGOs as well as the best known government aid agencies. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Canadian Universities Overseas Organization (CUSO), and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) are among these. The first organization seeks teachers as well as technicians for technological transfer in overseas placements for countries such as Indonesia, Pakistan, Kenya, Francophone Africa, and the Caribbean and pays teachers' salaries roughly equivalent to those in Canada. CUSO, on the other hand, arranges partnerships with organizations in other countries. Their projects, many of which involve education, offer local wages. ACCC places subject area specialists, primarily college teachers.

For one developing country in particular, the opportunities continue to increase. With China's expanding economy and its entry into the World Trade Organization, more English teachers are needed than ever. The Chinese government recruits teachers between the ages of 25 and 55, offering roundtrip airfare, salaries of about $1,000 per month, depending on one's university degrees and teaching experience. In addition to the long tradition of English education in Hong Kong, private English language schools and elementary and secondary schools have opened in major cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Dahlian, and Guandong. Joint projects have begun with Canadian universities and colleges. Capilano College, North Vancouver, B.C. is one of several B.C. community colleges that offer term teaching positions in jointly-managed satellite centres in China.

One of the best professional opportunities in China for EFL teachers is the Canada-China Language Centre in Beijing, or the language training centre in Nanchong, Sichuan. Both centres were developed under CIDA and utilize Canadian materials, an innovative curriculum and a testing program developed at great expense and effort by some of Canada's top educators. CIDA still funds the centres but no longer pays salaries at Canadian rates. As a result, the positions are not as attractive as they were in former years. Teachers are paid a high salary by Chinese standards, provided free housing, and sometimes a roundtrip flight to China.

Despite these drawbacks, the working conditions and professional development are excellent for China. Many of the Chinese teachers at the CCLC and in Nanchong are familiar with communicative language teaching, and several have taken graduate degrees in Canada. Few universities in China could offer such a well-organized program or one where a Canadian teacher would be more welcome.

II. International Schools and the Certified Teacher

Certified teachers with experience in elementary and secondary schools in Canada can teach anywhere in the international school system. International schools taught in English operate under two umbrella organizations: the European Council of International Schools and the International Schools Services. Between them is a privately-funded network of schools in more than 90 different countries.

Most of these schools combine K-12 in the same facility, provide services to 400-800 students and are reasonably well-equipped with audio-visual and computer equipment. Generally, classes are small – about 20 students or less. For the most part, the students' parents are professionals and keenly interested in their children's education. In these respects, the teaching conditions compare to those of private schools in Canada. Furthermore, unlike public schools, international schools have no obligation to provide every child with an education. Disruptive or poorly-motivated pupils can be expelled. There are usually waiting lists of students hoping to be admitted into the program.

However, local conditions vary greatly, depending on whether or not the school is in a capital city, and supported by foreign embassies, and multi-nationals. Such schools offer the best working conditions, and the best salaries, perhaps as high as $70,000. Employment at all international schools is by two-year contract. In most cases, this will be renewed as a matter of course, with a free flight and initial moving expenses. Employee benefits also depend entirely on the country and the school. Benefits usually include teacher assistance with photocopying, extra pay for after-school activities, a housing allowance, reduced tuition fees should one send one's children to the school (ie. 90% of costs), access to a group insurance plan, limited medical and retirement benefits, and free air fare and shipping home upon signing a two-year contract.

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III. Placement Services

International school administrators attend several fairs in the U.S. and Canada over several weeks in the early spring. A trade newspaper, The International Educator, www.tieonline.com, lists upcoming jobs and fairs. The ideal candidate profiles are a husband and wife who are both teachers, have worked overseas and possess a minimum of two years teaching experience.

The "granddaddy" of international school hiring fairs is the one organized through the University of Northern Iowa.

Attending the hiring fairs often requires a substantial investment. Because many of the fairs are privately-run, they operate to make a profit and charge high user fees. Contacts and rates change, but each organization maintains a website and updates. As of writing, the information is as follows. The "granddaddy" of international school hiring fairs is the one organized through the University of Northern Iowa. Established in 1976 as an extension of its teacher education program, it charges a nominal $50-75 (U.S.) participation fee to meet all the headmasters and headmistresses. It's the largest of the fairs with 110 international schools from more than 65 countries. Another non-profit hiring fair with a nominal fee is AASA, the Association of American Schools in South America. Some 40 schools in that region use this service. Closer to home is the fair at Queens University, administered through the Placement Office of the Faculty of Education. Held in February, it hosts 40 to 50 schools and charges a $100 (CND) to participate.

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ISS, the International Schools Services, holds hiring fairs as well, one in London, Ontario. The company charges for registration and placement for a total of $450 (U.S.). Another fair in Canada is the hiring fair held in Vancouver by ECIS, the European Council of International Schools. Participants are charged about $500 (U.S.) to have their documents filed and posted over the two-day conference.

After some years working at international schools, a teacher may not need to use hiring fairs and professional search services at all. One might decide upon a country, network among acquaintances teaching there, then visit the schools and headmasters and interview informally.

IV. Opportunities in Japan

Japan remains the largest market for English teachers. With the economic slump and the decline in student enrollments due to an ageing population, the labor market for teaching English in Japan has cooled. However, Japan has a large population and the second-largest economy in the world, so there are still more opportunities there at every level of experience and training than anywhere else. Of the numerous sites (www.jobsinjapan.com, and www.englishresource.com/classifieds/jobs.shtml/) offering information specifically about Japan, www.eltnews.com or the online journal Ohayo Sensei (www.ohayosensei.com) are the most comprehensive. Well-qualified teachers can work in international schools, or in Japanese high schools. Those with graduate degrees can find part-time work in the universities.

The biggest obstacle in coming to Japan is obtaining a working visa. The situation is virtually a "Catch-22." A teacher can't get a job without a visa yet can't get a visa without a job. In effect, to obtain a working visa, one must be recruited from overseas. Alternately, one could come to Japan on a tourist visa, find a position, sign a contract, then leave Japan briefly for nearby Seoul, Korea or Bangkok, Thailand and obtain a working visa from one of the two Japanese embassies.

As a result, many teachers come to Japan with one-year contracts to work for companies such as Aeon, Geos, and Nova that operate English conversation schools all over Japan. All three companies recruit overseas, selecting university graduates with teaching experience. The one-year contracts they offer of about $37,000 per year for a 25 to 30-hour work week and others like these are not binding. A teacher may leave a school without losing that year's working visa. The following year, the teacher can self-sponsor himself or herself by putting together enough contracts from part-time work to earn at least $2,000 per month. Much of this information can be accessed through websites such as www.eltnews.com, a truly comprehensive resource, or online journal, *Ohayo Sensai*

If one is under 35 years of age, another way of getting to Japan is through the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program funded by the Japanese government. In order to achieve the broadly defined goal of internationalization, MOFA, the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs hires about 6,000 college graduates from America, Canada, and Britain as either Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) who help English teachers in classrooms across Japan, or as Coordinators of International Relations (CIRs),

assigned to city halls, and other administrative units, acting as translators and cultural resource personnel. Although all the salaries are the same, all about 300,000 yen or $3,800 per month after taxes and medical insurance, working conditions and benefits vary greatly, with better situations, even subsidized housing found in rural, more remote areas. Application forms and information is available from the Japanese embassy or online (www.jetorg.manitoba). Applicants are restricted to university graduates under the age of 35. If accepted, their contracts may be renewed twice, for a total of three years.

Numerous private Japanese high schools also recruit those with teaching credentials to teach English. Conditions such as class size, teaching hours, and holiday time vary from one school to another as does the pay though a full-time salary of about $55,000 seems fairly standard.

Japanese Universities

Overseas hire for tenured full-time university positions in Japan is rare. Universities prefer to employ professors who have had some experience teaching in Japan and possess at least a modest ability to communicate in Japanese. According to the Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT) at www.jalt.org, salaries range from 5 to 9 million yen, about $63,000 to $114,000, depending on one's qualifications, the reputation of the school, and one's age and rank, with higher salaries to older teachers. Additional money is paid for writing and marking entrance exams. Where vacancies do exist, they tend to be in areas of specialization such as linguistics or inter-cultural communications and require a PhD.

There are further difficulties associated with obtaining a full-time, tenured university position. For one thing, there are very few of them, numbering less than 300 jobs according to sources here. For reasons of economy, most university classes are contracted out to part-time lecturers or professors on term contracts of several years. A second, more disturbing aspect, is that Japanese universities actively discriminate against older teachers, in part, because of their higher rates of pay. Professors' salaries are calculated in increments based on when they completed their undergraduate degrees as well as their respective rank as full-time lecturers, assistant professors, associate or full professors.

Many institutions limit applicants to those under 45, even under 40 years of age. A very thorough discussion of this issue may be found on a website operated by David Aldwinkle (www.debito.org/essays.html), a professor in Hokkaido who has catalogued complaints against various institutions in Japan.

Part-time work in Japan for teachers with graduate degrees is found everywhere in Japan.

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Part-time work in Japan for teachers with graduate degrees is found everywhere in Japan. Faculty-of-Arts departments at most universities offer courses in English conversation and composition. Working conditions and class sizes at institutions fluctuate from as few as 8 students to as high as 75 and so do the rates of pay. Generally, a 90-minute class will pay about $90 and include transportation expenses. While the fee may sound relatively modest, it's often paid on a 52-week basis though there is a maximum of 28 weeks in an academic year. Part-time teachers willing to travel to different schools, instruct private students or do some free lance editing and writing can make a very good living and enjoy a substantial amount of holiday time.

Two of the best books on teaching in Japan are Paul Wadden (1993), *A Handbook for Teaching English at Japanese Colleges and Universities*, and Dale Bay (1997) *Teaching English in Japan: A Professional Journey*. The first book consists of chapters describing issues in language education in Japanese universities, the working and classroom conditions, and practical advice on obtaining a visa, and employment. The latter book was written by a Canadian teacher who spent more than 10 years in Japan teaching in Japanese high schools and universities.

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Within Japan, there are job fairs at the national conference of the Japan Association of Language Teachers (www.jalt.org/jalt-e/main/careers.html), usually held in October or November of each year. JALT also publishes a monthly journal that includes job listings, *The Language Teacher*. One might also register for the JALT job postings e-list by sending a blank message to tlt_jic@jalt.org. In addition, there is the Association of Canadian Teachers in Japan which maintains an email list, produces a quarterly newsletter, and presents an annual conference (*contact* tutortom@mpd.biglobe.ne.jp).

VI. Preparing to Go

This short piece has outlined a few aspects of teaching abroad and described some of the avail-

able resources. Professional teaching organizations, particularly the annual conferences of TESL Canada and TESOL, offer additional information as well. *The TESOL Bulletin*, for example, advertises teaching vacancies around the world. Advertisements for teaching assignments overseas can be found in back issues of *Contact* as well.

Contracts for international schools and most assignments to universities in the Middle East are for a minimum of two years.

As with most career moves, research pays off in ever way. Contracts for international schools and most assignments to universities in the Middle East are for a minimum of two years. For places like Japan, and Korea, teachers need to take a longer view of assignments as well. The popular misconception is that teachers can work in these countries for periods of as little as six months and make a substantial amount of money. Set-up costs for accommodation, furnishings, and even finding work make this an impossibility, not to mention the problem of paying taxes in two jurisdictions, in Japan, then again for the same period in Canada. Adequate, careful planning can make the difference between a mediocre assignment in a place one might not choose, and the experience, perhaps the opportunity of lifetime.

Appendix

Bay, D. (1997). *Teaching English in Japan: A professional journey*. Tokyo: Sanyusha. (available from the author at dalebay2000@yahoo.com).

Hachey, J. (2000). (3rd ed.). *The Canadian Guide to Working and Living Overseas*. Ottawa: Intercultural Systems, P.O. Box 5888, Station B, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5P7, (613) 238-6169; Fax (613) 238-5274.

Kealey, D. (1990). (2nd ed.). *Cross-cultural Effectiveness: A study of Canadian Technical Advisors Overseas*. Ottawa: Canadian International Development Agency.

Paul Wadden (ed.) (1993). *A Handbook for Teaching English at Japanese Colleges and Universities*. New York: Oxford University Press.

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Important Addresses

International Schools:

AASSA, Association of American Schools in South America
14750 N.W. 77th Court, Ste. 210
Miami Lakes, FL 33016
Tel: (305) 821-0345
Fax: (305) 821-4244
E-mail: info@aassa.com
http://www.aassa.com/htm/fairrecruit.htm

ECIS, European Council of International Schools
21 Lavant St.
Petersfield Hamshire
GU32 3EL England
Tel: (44) 1730-268244
Fax: (44) 1730-267914
www.ecis.org
E-mail: jimmckay@ecis.org
Jim McKay, Executive Officer, staffing services

ISS, International Schools Services
P.O. Box 5910
Princeton, NJ 08543
Tel: (609) 452-0900
Fax: (609) 542-2690
www.search-associates.com

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R.R. 5#
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Placement Office, Faculty of Education
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Tel: (613) 5454-6222
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Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0390
Tel: (319) 273-2083
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Email: overseas.placement@uni.edui
http://www.uni.edu/placement/overseas/

For China

Education Department, The People's Republic of China (which also maintains consulates in Toronto, Montreal, Edmonton, and Vancouver) 515 St. Patrick Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 5H3, (613) 789-9608, Fax (613) 789-1414 (www.chinaembassy.org/en/index.html) *or by e-mail* cooffice@buildlink.com.

Alternately, write directly to:

Mao Dawei, Head Teacher, Canada-China Language Centre

P.O. Box 44, Beijing Normal University
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Professor Ou
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Shi You Dong Lu
Nanchong, Sichuan Province 637001
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For Japan

Japan (which also maintains consulates in Toronto, Montreal, Edmonton, and Vancouver) 255 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 9E6, (613) 241-8541 (www.japanembassy.org) *or e-mail contact* eoj.consul@ca.inter.net.

Websites for Japan

www.debito.org/essays.html

www.eltnews.com

www.englishresource.com/classifieds/jobs.shtml/

www.eslcafe.com/jobs

www.eslworldwide.com

www.geocities.com/Tokyo/Flats/7947/eflasia.htm

www.jalt.org/jalt-e/main/careers.html

www.jobsinjapan.com

www.ohayosensei.com

Gregory Strong, president of the Association of Canadian Teachers in Japan, fields many questions related to teaching in Japan. He is an associate professor in the English Department at Aoyama University where he teaches Composition, Canadian Studies, and co-ordinates the intensive English language program for freshmen and sophmore students. Previously, he spent two years in China as a teacher trainer, and tester for CIDA and St. Mary's University, Nova Scotia, and before that, he taught ESL in several colleges and school districts in Vancouver.

TESL Hamilton Wentworth ESL Student Award

Lisa Ramacieri

The TESL Hamilton-Wentworth Affiliate awards a dictionary or gift certificate to an exceptional ESL High School Student in the Hamilton area. Our award is called the Betty Penton Award. Betty Penton was a former ESL teacher, who was very active on the TESL Hamilton-Wentworth Executive, and who was a special ESL teacher who went beyond the call of duty with regards to her students. She was an exceptional teacher who died of breast cancer. The award was established in her name about 12 years ago. Eligible ESL students must:

- have high academic achievement
- be involved in extra-curricular activities.
- be trying hard at academics
- have a positive attitude
- be in grade 11

The ESL teacher and department head of the school chooses a student, and submits a bio to our executive. Then, the executive chooses from about six candidates. The award is presented annually at the students' Fall Convocation ceremony by the TESL Hamilton-Wentworth executive-President.

Designing CALL Materials

John Allan Abu Dhabi Men's Higher College, U.A.E.
Jim Edgar, Dubai Men's College, U.A.E.

In November of 2001, we met at a TESOL conference in the Middle East. Jim Edgar was presenting a session titled, "Teacher-developed Multimedia: How and Why?" One point that Jim stressed in this assembly was that he found teachers preferred web based materials for publishing their CALL activities. This had not occurred to me until this session. I had been spending the last seven years experimenting with complex authoring software such as Director, Authorware, Visual Basic, JavaScript, ToolBook and Flash.

What is the best for ESL teachers is to have materials created, that they can use on any computer regardless of platform or computer performance.

For most ESL teachers these programs are too complicated to learn. They require a steep learning curve and to exact total control, they demand at least one year of dedication to learn the scripting language that accompanies them. They all allow one to publish the results on the Internet but they usually require expert programming to tabulate results. They also require an extra program known commonly as a plug-in.

Watching the "e"-revolution transpiring at our college, I have learned that more expensive and more complex is not always the best solution. What is the best for ESL teachers is to have materials created, that they can use on any computer regardless of platform or computer performance. Thus, Jim's words ring clearly in my head, "develop CALL materials for the Web."

CALL materials that are produced for Web browsers can be shared across the hallway, school board, city, district, province, or world.

Below is a compilation of reasons for developing CALL software for Web resources. These are a result of brainstorming with Mr. Edgar.

Technical Terms

All browsers support HTML (Hyper Text Mark up Language) and DHTML (Dynamic Hyper Text Mark up Language). Although they are proprietary, differences in the treatment of HTML and DHTML by browsers are minimal in affecting the function of CALL materials. They all support the essential media of CALL materials: formatted text, tables, images, digital video, digital audio and JavaScript or Visual Basic script.

The text, tables, images, digital video and audio allow the CALL materials to present information that will enable the students to react in the form of answering questions. The JavaScript or Visual Basic script will allow the computer to assess if the student's response is correct or incorrect and to prompt with some sort of feedback or simply calculate the student's score.

Why develop Web-based CALL materials?

Compatibility

CALL materials that are produced for Web browsers can be shared across the hallway, school board, city, district, province, or world. All browsers can read and understand HTML tags. Thus any materials authored for a browser can be used in most of today's computers. It is important to remember that Web CALL materials compatibility means that teachers can be sure that the work they put in today will be useful and adjustable for years, unlike proprietary packages like Director, BBC or Commodore64 Basic.

Distribution

Sharing can take place by four methods; first, emailing the HTML documents with their media (images, movies, sound, and animation files) to another educator. Next, it is common to save the files to a diskette or CD and physically take them to another computer. Further to this, the documents can be printed on paper and passed to another educator by traditional means. Finally, the HTML and media files can be stored on a local or secure server for future retrieval by another individual.

Individual Portfolio of Materials

An individual teacher can also develop CALL activities that they know will be useful for future classes and compatible with any school they may migrate to in the future. They can consider these

materials part of their professional development and in some cases private property.

Cost

Managers require that CALL materials development be cost-recoverable. All modern computers have browsers ready-to-run. Browser software is free, period! Included with the computer's operating system (Windows or Mac) or downloaded from the Internet or installed from a complimentary magazine CD the browser is complimentary. Copyright for the browser is not an issue; nor is availability or cost.

When developing CALL materials in some proprietary packages, the developer incurs various restrictions and hidden costs. An example of this is Macromedia Director. The author must place the Macromedia logo on the executable file storage device, CD or diskette and on the packaging of the materials. Also, he/she must submit two copies of the materials to Macromedia Corporation. Macromedia Director runs about $2,000 USD, for a user's license. Authoring materials in HTML avoids these costs since the Web is crowded with HTML authoring tools. One of these HTML publishers will be analyzed in the following article.

The LINC labs in Ontario have Web browsers loaded that can process HTML and DHTML. Accordingly, they can support any HTML code-driven CALL materials produced.

Digital Media Support

HTML and DHTML support the following media: text, images, digital video, digital audio, animations and 3D models. As a CALL developer you have the ability to present material in any of the available digital formats.

Setup

There is no set-up involved with a Web browser. They are included in the operating system of all modern computers. Upgrades are quick and painless. It is recommended that you upgrade using a CD from a current computer magazine to upgrade your browser. Installing a browser upgrade from a CD will save downloading and installation time. A note of caution: don't always upgrade to the most recent version of a browser. Let the browser be tested by others. If there are no major problems then upgrade.

Familiar Interface

Students and faculty are now familiar with the interface and workings of a browser. As a result the CALL HTML materials will be recognizable to most students. Initially, this will help emancipate learners from the software and allow them to concentrate on the language task.

Learning "Creation" Curve

Authoring or creating CALL materials for HTML has a uniform learning curve since there are great widgets out there such as "Hot Potatoes." Hot Potatoes (see next article) is extremely simple to use. It automatically produces efficient HTML and JavaScript code that enables multimedia inclusion and user interaction with your CALL exercises.

Technology is Quickly Dated

Authoring systems such as Director or Toolbook continually need upgrading to keep pace with increases in processor speed. This is an expensive proposition since an upgrading in authoring software usually can cost up to $1,000 USD. Web browser upgrades are free and easily downloaded from the web or installed quickly from a magazine CD.

CALL materials authored in older versions of software may not be compatible with newer versions of the authoring software. In some cases the CALL materials must be completely rewritten. All content written in HTML for older browsers works quite well with the latest versions of Web browsers. Web browsers seem to be here to stay.

Printable

All materials developed for the Web can be printed. In some cases the developer can place restrictions on printing but this is rare. Your CALL materials can be used at the computer or on paper in the traditional classroom environment.

Hosting is Free

Where do you put your CALL materials once they have been created for the Web? Web hosting is free. There are hundreds of servers out there vying for you to place your content on them. Yours is not to ask why but to take advantage of a competitive marketplace. Examples are AngelFire, FreeWebHosting, FreeHomePage and Homestead. You can also place them on a diskette, CD, DVD or

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digital tape. LINC Ontario schools can use their intranet to share these materials between workstations. This is accomplished by placing the exercise on one of the computer's hard drives and sharing it through Network Neighborhood or whatever networking scheme the centre has established.

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Conclusion

Authoring CALL materials for Web browsers is quick and easy when widgets are employed. The materials can be easily created, shared, distributed, printed and hosted. As an integral part of many schools, browsers are familiar, free, easily upgraded and support old HTML documents. It is highly recommended that CALL materials developed by ESL professionals be created in DHTML or HTML format since they can be eventually shared with the greater TESOL community.

Wow, I Could have had a Hot Potato!

John Allan Abu Dhabi Men's Higher College, U.A.E.

In past issues of TESL *Contact*, the concept of teacher authored CALL (computer assisted language learning) exercises has been discussed. In ESL and the Electronic Age Part XI, the debate on whether teachers should create their own computer-based language teaching materials was explored. Later, in *Contact* Spring 2000 it was concluded that it might be too much of an undertaking for teachers to create their own CALL materials. In addition, the previous article "Publish to the Web" concludes, it is best that ESL teachers publish their materials for the Web browser format since the materials can be easily created, shared, distributed, printed, and hosted.

Fortunately, skilled computer programmers have created widgets that allow teachers to include text, digital movies, animations, and audio files in their CALL materials.

CALL Authoring Software

Over the past few years, I have been struggling with different means of creating CALL materials, initially, starting with Visual Basic, migrating to Macromedia Director, dabbling in Macromedia Flash and producing some materials with HTML and finally returning to Director as a training tool. The amount of time and energy spent learning these packages has been enormous. Countless late nights, weekends and a string of vacations were necessary to become more or less competent with these authoring packages.

Fortunately, skilled computer programmers have created widgets that allow teachers to include text, digital movies, animations, and audio files in their CALL materials. These widgets such as Hot Potatoes are known as closed authoring packages – closed because they allow one to create CALL materials with layout and functionality restrictions. Open-ended authoring occurs when the creator makes a CALL activity for computer delivery without any restriction from raw programming code or a powerful authoring tool with script such as Macromedia Director.

Delivery of CALL materials created with high-end authoring packages is problematic. Compatibility issues such as platform (MAC or PC), operating systems, plug-ins or specialized driver file availability make running some applications impossible. The answer to the delivery of CALL materials is simply to write them for Web-based browsers. All machines can read them, all platforms can run them and in most cases there are no plug-ins or DLL files needed.

Wow!

As a part of continuing professional development our college offered us a week of workshops. I had heard of Hot Potatoes before but because it was a freeware package I thought that it would have too many limitations on a teacher's creativity. I was wrong! This free authoring system provides teachers with a straightforward means of creating computer-based teaching materials that can be

posted on the Web, local server, on local hard drives or on any removable memory media.

What is Hot Potato?

It is a compilation of six authoring tools that allows educators to generate interactive exercises. A common interface and common sense allow educators to create multiple-choice, short-answer question, cloze, sorting, matching and crossword activities that function on any Web browser version later than version 2.0. The authoring suite is available in Macintosh or Windows formats. The generated exercises function on all platforms since they are browser based.

Who Makes It?

The program itself is designed by Half-Baked Software, a company created with the help of the Innovation and Development Corporation at the University of Victoria. Martin Holmes and Stewart Arneil are the men who have created this program.

What Makes It Easy?

The interface is familiar and user friendly for Mac or Windows users. All of the necessary commands can be completed by simply clicking on icons. Even though Hot Potatoes creates interactive exercises in JavaScript , HTML and DHTML the teacher only needs to enter the information in the form of texts, answers, questions, and pictures. One of Hot Potato's programs will create the exercises in the form of web pages for you.

What are Its Strengths?

Hot Potatoes provide a comprehensive, practical tutorial with the program. After a one-hour session many ESL teachers should have the ability to confidently put together CALL exercises. Also, you can recycle content to provide your students with repetition of the theme or grammatical structure being emphasized in the lesson. As mentioned earlier, these can be in the form of a short answer exercises, a sorting task, a multiple-choice quiz, a cloze exercise and a crossword.

Website Support

Half-Baked software have an excellent on-line resource for users of Hot Potatoes http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/hotpot. It has a download section, an on-line technical support page, an add-ons page (additional downloads that can enhance the software), a link page to many Web activities developed with Hot Potatoes and an FAQ (frequently asked questions) page.

Web-CT

Hot Potatoes also has an automatic publish to Web-CT format. This makes it easier for faculty who are involved in institutions that enforce or encourage computer based training materials to be placed in a Web-CT shell. If you are not involved in this, don't ask! Just walk away slowly.

It is a compilation of six authoring tools that allows educators to generate interactive exercises.

The Publishing Process

There are five steps to publishing a CALL exercise using Hot Potatoes. The first is choosing the type of exercise you wish to create. For example you may chose a cloze exercise. The second step is entering the data. This includes inserting pictures, sounds or video; copying and pasting or typing a reading, or questions. The third step is configuring the output of the exercise. This consists of inputting hints, feedback (both positive and constructive), exercise instructions, naming buttons, deciding on the text's font and size and the colour scheme of the exercise. Also configuring the output allows you to determine if a timer is present for each question or reading and if the questions are shuffled each time the materials are utilized by a student. Additionally, this shuffling includes reordering the correct response and distracters within each question. Therefore the students view a different test each time they reload the exercise.

The fourth stage is generating the exercise to a Web format. At this point you must determine the Web browser version of your audience (your school's computers). If the browsers are newer than version 4.0 then you should create with the option to place exercises in DHTML. Otherwise choose the Export to Web selection.

At this point the file will be placed with an accompanying folder on your hard drive. You can place it locally on you Local Area Network (don't forget to pay for a license) or you can publish it to the Internet.

Hot Potatoes provide a comprehensive, practical tutorial with the program. After a one-hour session many ESL teachers should have the ability to confidently put together CALL exercises.

Inserting Audio and Video

Hot Potatoes does not have an internal audio or video player. You must rely on the end user (your students) to have an audio and a video player

on their workstation. Windows and Macintoshes arrive with players. If these have been removed or damaged there are plenty of free players from the Internet or computer magazine CDs. If the video or audio is to be incorporated on a CALL exercise over the Internet, you may reconsider since long downloads may hinder with the progress of the computer-based activity. However, video or sound may be essential for the activity. It is simple to insert these files in Hot Potatoes. It is not so simple to create them. It is advisable to get an audiovisual staff member to help with the making of these files.

What is the Catch?

Hot Potatoes can be downloaded for free onto your computer through the Internet at http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/hotpot/#downloads. It can be used at no cost by individuals or non-profit educational institutions on the understanding that materials produced through Hot Potatoes software are generously accessible on the Internet without any fee. Licenses must be purchased if the users have commercial aspirations or wish to publish their exercises.

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On-line Samples

Look at http://www.angelfire.com/ct3/esl/index.htm to see a few exercises made with Hot Potatoes. Also, at the Hot Potatoes Web site there are links to other exercises created around the world at http://web.uvic.ca/hcmc/rnd/comprog.html#hotpotsites.

Variation

A variation for advanced students is to allow students to create their own activities related to a theme or project they have created in class. The use of the Web page format, and the ability for learners to see their work on a browser makes the program especially motivating.

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Conclusion

Hot Potatoes offers educators a realistic means to create CALL materials for their students. As Hot Potatoes is a closed authoring system, the layout and functionality may be somewhat constrained but teachers can produce materials that can be used on any computer that has a Web browser as long as they save the materials they create on a CD Rom.